commonweal

Abigail McCarthy
CUOMO & THE LAITY

The Editors
DEFICIT DEBATING

$1.25

OCTOBER 19, 1984

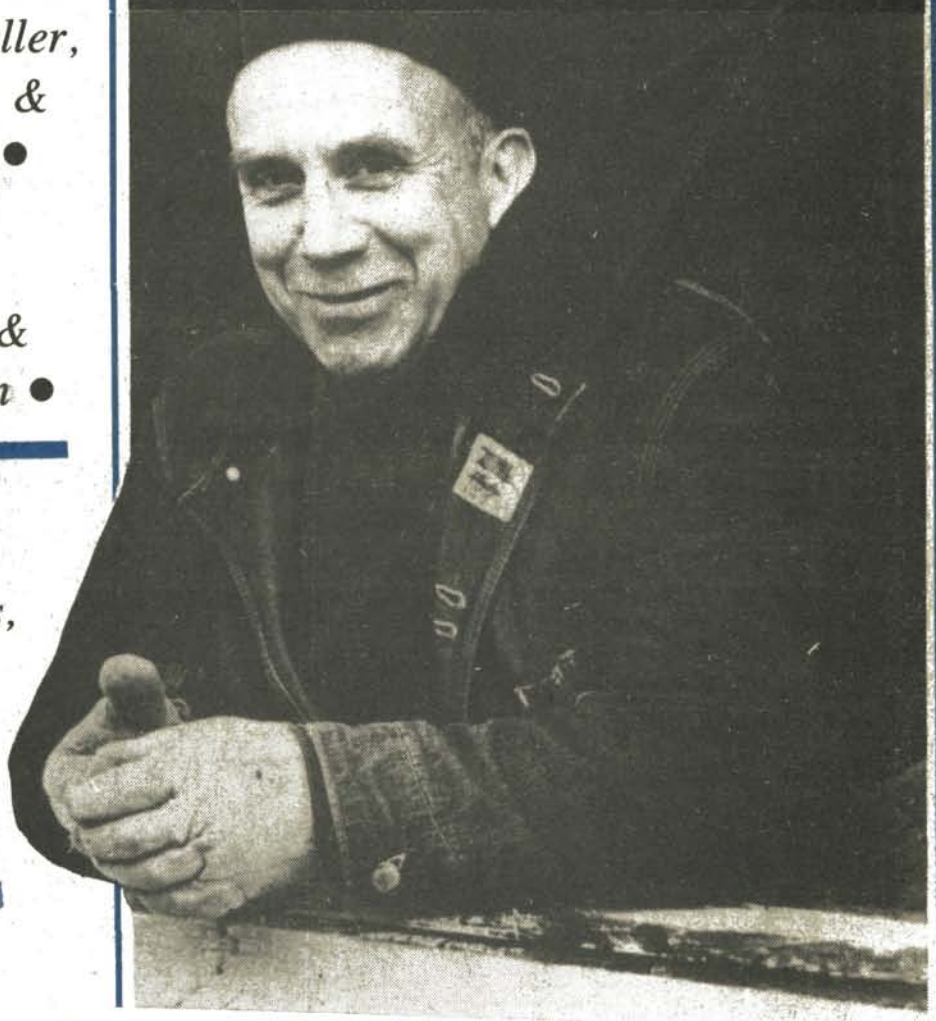
# Fall books

*Biographies of Margaret Mead & Matteo Ricci ● Novels by Joseph Heller, Jayne Anne Phillips, & Mario Vargas Llosa ● Books on the church by Eugene Kennedy, Andrew M. Greeley & Mary Greeley Durkin ●*

*Reviewed by Bradd Shore, John W. O'Malley, Joel Wells, Robert Phillips, Ronald Christ, & Robert Imbelli*

## The Merton we knew

W.H. FERRY • ROBERT LAX
JOHN EUDES BAMBERGER



St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

RAPHIES
N
ST CHARLES SEM LIB
CARTHAGENA STA
CELINA OH 45822
8412
0079978N

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Celebrating 30 years of Doubleday Image Books

**Since 1954, publishing inexpensive paperback editions of the finest Catholic literature. This fall, new books include two contemporary classics by Anthony de Mello, including SADHANA—"the best book available today in English for Christians on how to pray, meditate, and contemplate."***

**SADHANA: A Way to God**
*Anthony de Mello, S.J.* The international bestseller that blends Christian and Eastern approaches to prayer. $4.95

**THE SONG OF THE BIRD**
*Anthony de Mello, S.J.* Parable-like stories drawn from many spiritual traditions continue Fr. de Mello's lessons in contemplation. $5.95

**CALLED TO HEAL**
**Releasing the Transforming Power of God**
*Fr. Ralph A. DiOrio.* Reflecting on his special "call," Fr. DiOrio discusses the meaning and practice of his healing ministry. $7.95

**DEATH BY CHOICE**
*Daniel C. Maguire.* A distinguished moral theologian explores the major issues in the "right to die" controversy. $6.95

**THE IMAGE OF GUADALUPE**
**Myth or Miracle?**
*Jody Brant Smith.* How and why—spiritually and scientifically—the image of Our Lady appeared on a poor Aztec's cloak. $6.95

**REJOICE!**
**Experiencing the Joy of Christmas Each Day of the Year**
*Fulton J. Sheen.* This handsome, richly illustrated volume gathers a beloved writer's inspiring reflections on Nativity themes. $8.95

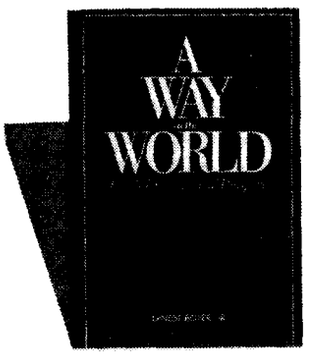
**PATHWAYS OF SPIRITUAL LIVING**
*Susan Annette Muto.* Step by step, this acclaimed author shows the way to spiritual formation for Christians *in the world.* $6.95

*Harvey D. Egan, S.J., Catholic Theological Seminary of America

**Over 30,000,000 Image Books printed DOUBLEDAY**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

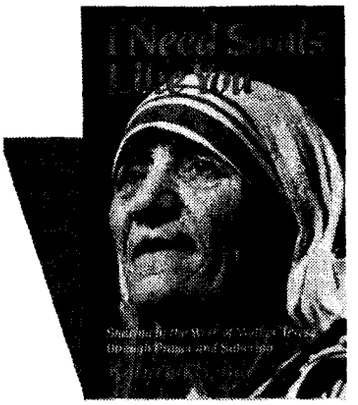
# MAKE SPIRITUALITY THE HEART of EVERY DAY




## A WAY IN THE WORLD

Family Life as Spiritual Discipline
*Ernest Boyer, Jr.*

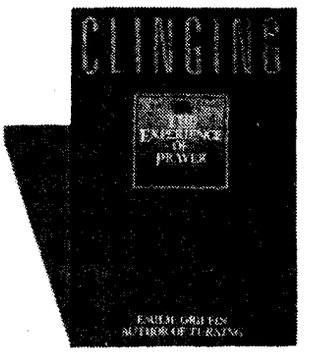
"For men and women everywhere who, in the thick of marriage and raising children, seek to practice the presence of God . . . written with honesty, insight, and deep religious feeling."
*—Frederick Buechner* $12.95*



## I NEED SOULS LIKE YOU

Sharing in the Work of Mother Teresa through Prayer and Suffering
*Kathryn Spink*

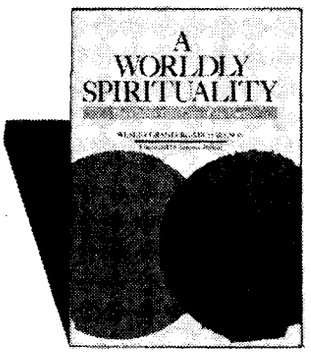
The full story of Mother Teresa's Sick and Suffering Co-Workers worldwide shows how the afflicted can work for the salvation of humanity in their homes or hospital beds. Here is eloquent proof that "suffering shared with Christ's passion is a wonderful gift . . . is joy." *—Mother Teresa* $10.95*




## CLINGING

The Experience of Prayer
*Emilie Griffin*

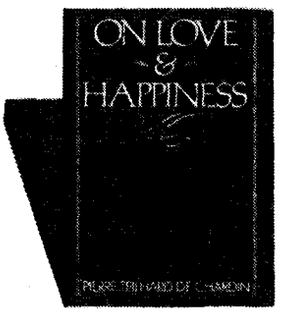
"Not just another book about prayer. In strikingly original and contemporary language . . . Griffin offers a description of prayer so vivid that I was led deeply into the experience of it."
*—Henri J.M. Nouwen* $10.95*




## A WORLDLY SPIRITUALITY

The Call to Take Care of the Earth
*Wesley Granberg-Michaelson*

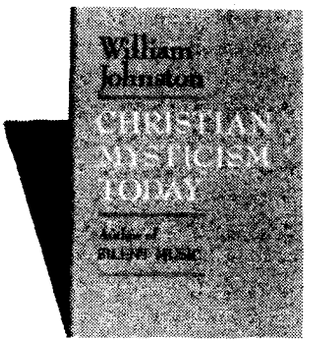
"Forges a new and hopeful path with penetrating biblical insights . . . back to God, the creator and healer of the earth . . . Shows what faithfulness to God's creation can mean today." *—Jim Wallis* $12.95*




## ON LOVE AND HAPPINESS

*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

This handsome gift edition offers a generous selection from the profound, illuminating, spiritually enriching thoughts of the renowned visionary/priest on love and happiness. $9.95*




## CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM TODAY

*William Johnston*

"Brings to the sources of Christian mysticism a broad experience and a lively wit, and Scripture, Eucharist and community open new doors for us into the heart of Reality . . . It is Johnston's best."
*—Basil Pennington* $12.95*

*At bookstores now or*
*Call TOLL-FREE: 800-638-3030*

HARPER & ROW
SAN FRANCISCO

**Suggested consumer price*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Correspondence

## Perfect practice

Stony Brook, N.Y.

*To the Editors:* I was encouraged and gratified to see Donald Evans's article on knowing spiritual reality [July 13]. My experiences in parish ministry and university chaplaincy leave me convinced that spiritually hungry people turn from what they consider the empty formalism of Christianity because they have never learned to become, in Evans's words, "aware of themselves as spirit." I would, however, like to make two comments: one an extension, the other a caution.

I am a psychologist by training, not a philosopher; and perhaps because of my different viewpoint I would move to the foreground what Evans mentions regularly but only incidentally: practice. I am convinced that even relatively automatic processes such as perception are at root skilled and active performances; thus to learn to experience "spiritual reality" is to become adept at a skill. And one masters skills by guided practice. A person who has never learned to swim simply cannot experience the ocean the way a swimmer does. If the Mystery of God is the "ocean" in which we are immersed, pastoral ministry becomes in large part the giving of swimming lessons. To admit and to give up our anti-spiritual bias is necessary, but by itself it is not enough.

Evans is also correct on the risks of narcissistic inflation for one who has such experiences as he describes. One can't say everything in one short article, but I wish he had said more about the inevitability of egotistic distortions, and thus about our need for continuing personal guidance. The dogmatic symbols of our tradition, the rituals of the community, and the moral imperatives of Christian life all are most effectively communicated to an apprentice by a guide who understands through his or her own skilled experience the proper role of these sources of wisdom and protection. Spiritual renewal will come only with the emergence of teachers within the church who can say with accurate self-knowledge, "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ" (I Cor 11:1).

(REV.) VINCENT RUSH

## No monolithic view

Milwaukee, Wis.

*To the Editors:* It is unforgivably late in the debate for *Commonweal* to editorialize about "the church's view of abortion" — as if there were one church view of all abortions that is normative for all Catholics [September 7]. Let me unfold the fallacies in this, beginning, Irish-style, with a question.

Would *Commonweal* speak of "the church's view of contraception," and then allow only for disagreement "with the bishops on what, if anything, should be done about it legally"? Not at all. *Commonweal*, in the company of most Catholic theologians, does not accept the relentlessly reasserted view of the popes and bishops on artificial contraception as "the church's view," and then move on to discussions of "policy implementation" of that one rigorous view on the national scene. But say "abortion," and all that changes.

Where does *Commonweal* find this single church view on abortion? Surely not in the "*sensus fidelium*." Polls find Catholics almost as differentiating and contextual in judging abortions as other citizens. Surely not in any consensus of Catholic theologians that all abortions are immoral. Even conservative theologians, like Richard McCormick, S.J., defend direct abortion to save the life of the woman, and other theologians note that saving her life often means more than saving her physical life. Surely not in an unambiguous tradition supported by a critical historiography of abortion-related texts, since such does not exist in Catholic scholarship. Surely not in any consensus on what it is that is being aborted in the first eight weeks when most abortions occur. Surely this alleged Catholic "view" does not come from respectful dialogue on abortion with Protestant Christians or Jews since mainline Protestants and Reform Jews generally disagree with a monistic view on abortion, and are waiting for Catholic theologians and bishops to take their views more seriously. Surely not from dialogue with women who have faced abortion decisions, since neither *Commonweal* nor the bishops have opened the door to this theological source. And surely "the view" does not come from faith since *Commonweal* says it does not, but purportedly comes from "ordinary forms of moral reasoning common to believers and nonbelievers."

And there is the rub. "Ordinary forms of moral reasoning" do not lead to *a* view. They lead to views. Protestant views, Jewish views, and Catholic *views*. Though the bishops seem to have missed it, even the "forms of moral reasoning" in Catholic moral theology have changed in the past fifteen years on this issue. The "direct killing of innocent life" rubric has been reevaluated, thus pulling the main stitch in Cardinal Bernardin's "seamless garment." "Directness" is not commonly seen as morally decisive. And embryology is pressing us to distinctions between personal and pre-personal life, lending support to St. Alphonsus's very traditional judgment that "the fetus is certainly not animated before it is formed."

At the root of this decision is a neglected ecclesiological issue. It is past time for us Catholics to take a lesson from our parent religion, Judaism. Like Judaism, post-Vatican II Catholicism is quadripartite. There are Reform Catholics, Conservatives, Orthodox, and Hasidic. As you move from Reform to

*(Continued on page 572)*

*Commonweal*, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042. Single copy, $1.25. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $24; Canada, $26; foreign, $29. Special two-year rate: U.S., $43; Canada, $47; foreign, $53. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank. *Commonweal* is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1984 Commonweal Foundation. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Contents


Volume CXI, Number 18

| | |
|---|---|
| Correspondence | 548 |
| Editorials | 549 |
| Cuomo & the lay voice: *Abigail McCarthy* | 550 |
| SDI: new technologies but old questions: *J. Bryan Hehir* | 552 |
| The Merton we knew: *W.H. Ferry, Robert Lax, John Eudes Bamberger* | 553 |
| Screen: *Tom O'Brien* | 557 |
| Stage: *Gerald Weales* | 558 |
| Morte D'Author: *James Harkness* | 564 |


# Books


| | |
|---|---|
| The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton/Follow the Ecstasy: *William H. Shannon* | 560 |
| Margaret Mead: *Bradd Shore* | 560 |
| God Knows: *Joel Wells* | 561 |
| The Now and Future Church/ How to Save the Catholic Church: *Robert Imbelli* | 563 |
| The War of the End of the World: *Ronald Christ* | 566 |
| Machine Dreams: *Robert Phillips* | 567 |
| The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci: *John W. O'Malley* | 568 |
| Growth in Agreement: *Michael A. Fahey* | 570 |
| A Social History of England: *Peter Steinfels* | 572 |


# Staff


Editor: Peter Steinfels
Assistant Editors: David Toolan, Karen Smith, Patrick Jordan
Production Editor: Anne Robertson
Poetry: Rosemary Deen, Marie Ponsot
Columnists: John Garvey, J. Bryan Hehir, Abigail McCarthy
Staff: Karen F. Silva, Harriette Balsky, Patricia Mazzola
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

*Illustrations:* Cover, Edward Rice, from Religious News Service; p. 551, Hy Rosen, *Albany Times-Union;* pp. 553, 557, Emil Antonucci; p. 560, Margaret Mead, Barnard yearbook.



commonweal


# DEFICIT DEBATING

THE LOUISVILLE DEBATE had just ended and there was White House Chief of Staff James Baker on network TV declaring that his man had won. Ticking off a long list of issues on which he believed the president had effectively defended the administration's record, Baker was quick, confident, composed, and articulate. In short a striking contrast to the president's own performance. Mr. Reagan, as always, exuded a hearty sincerity, but he was also noticeably uncertain, faltering, on the defensive. The media quickly found a phrase for it: the president was "off his stride."

The other possibility, of course, is that the contrast between the president and his White House aide revealed something typical, not atypical, about this administration's *modus operandi*. In *Deadly Gambit,* the masterful account of the Reagan administration's approach to arms negotiations, *Time* magazine's Strobe Talbott exposes what one reviewer (McGeorge Bundy) called Mr. Reagan's "ignorance of the most elementary issues" and what another reviewer (British nuclear strategist Lawrence Freedman) described this way: "The president appears to have played a bit part in his own administration, failing to make proper decisions . . . evaluating proposals in terms of how they might sound in a speech rather than on their merits."

Mr. Mondale's performance in the Louisville debate, by contrast, quickly earned its own media tag: "in command." In debating style, he certainly was. He even mentioned the Olympics first. He elegantly combined his body punches with expressions of respect for the president and the presidency. Joan Mondale swept to the side of her husband a good half second before Nancy Reagan, and she was immediately reinforced with loving children. But what about the beef?

From start to finish, except for the interludes about religion and abortion, this was almost wholly a debate about the deficit. Again, that was a remarkable *tour de force* for Mr. Mondale. The conventional wisdom holds that it is impossible to woo voters with talk of anything so complicated as the deficit, let alone anything so unpleasant as a tax increase. The conventional wisdom, of course, may eventually turn out to be right. And meantime, some liberals are wondering whether fighting deficits isn't a terribly limited centerpiece for the Democrats' agenda. Mr. Mondale said nothing about full employment, little about cities, crime, discrimination against women, the unfinished battle for racial equality, the protection and enlargement of democratic participation. Mr. Mondale is an airplane pilot with enough sense to know he must set down at the next opportunity for fuel and repairs but otherwise has no particular destination. By itself, getting the deficit off our back will no more solve the nation's problems than did Mr. Reagan's magic formula about the government.

But the deficit theme still makes a lot of sense. Mr. Mondale is, after all, a very middle-of-the-road, business-oriented liberal; no use his spinning visions he would never dare to implement. The deficit question, moreover, is a conservative way of




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*Commonweal* will be celebrating its Sixtieth Anniversary this November with a special 64-page combined issue dated November 2-16. Readers should receive this issue between November 5 and 12. We will resume our regular printing schedule with the November 30 issue.

posing two liberal questions: about fairness and about presidential leadership. The Reagan administration has built an economic recovery — of what depth and duration is up for debate — on a redistribution of wealth to the wealthy and a growth in inequality. The president coated this bitter medicine with promises that "it wouldn't hurt" and with a generally cheering bedside manner. Perhaps Mr. Mondale should have a more aggressive and positive economic program; one's views on that are probably influenced by one's views on the current state of economic understanding. But in any case, the Democratic contender appears simply to be saying: Whatever steps we must take to muddle through this mess, we won't take them at the expense of the vulnerable, and we won't pretend they'll be painless.

On reflection, a lot of Americans may prefer the Reagan approach. Maybe, they will more or less explicitly conclude, the only way to administer the medicine was to disguise the facts about whom it would hurt and how much. They may be particularly apt to think this way if they were not among those drafted to go to the front lines in the war against inflation. And again, they may intuitively realize, the Democrats' greater concern about equity introduces sticky elements of bargaining and indecisiveness into their efforts. Better to have an unfair economic program decisively implemented than a fairer one indecisively implemented. It was a measure of Mr. Mondale's success in the debate that he seemed to counter this intuition. He was the one appearing to face facts and stand behind necessary decisions; the president was the one engaged in wishful thinking about future economic growth and one minute resting his case on cutting government spending further while the next minute resting it on programs he had tried to cut but failed.

ONE SECTION of the debate was particularly disturbing. We do not believe that serious religious discussion should be excluded from political campaigns; indeed we would welcome any candidates' being asked to describe their fundamental convictions, whether religious or non-religious, and how these might affect political decisions. Still, there was a way in which the question about religious beliefs was posed that came awfully close to realizing the fears of many about establishing a religious test for high office. Why ask specifically whether a candidate was "born again"? Why pursue a candidate about church attendance? Note the way both candidates felt compelled to reply shiftily about whether they were "born again" — whether out of fear of offending the Christian Right by saying "no" or offending the cosmopolitan left by saying "yes." The discussion came close to being demeaning.

This part of the debate did produce some good statements. Mr. Reagan reaffirmed the separation of church and state; Mr. Mondale did even better in his forceful criticism of the school prayer amendment. But both candidates were also misleading. Mr. Reagan pretended that *he* had no responsibility for the insertion of religion into the campaign and that school prayer legislation involved nothing more than fending off a nasty attack on a child's right to say grace in the lunchroom. Mr. Mondale repeatedly described the Republican platform's demand that federal judges be committed to "traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life" as a "religious test"; one can challenge the value of elevating what the platform's codewords mean — anti-abortion sentiments and possibly anti-feminist and anti-gay ones also — into a special criterion for judgeships, but this still does not constitute a "religious test." It was proper that questions of religious values and abortion should be aired; it does not augur well that they were aired so clumsily.

## Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

# CUOMO & THE LAY VOICE

### THE CONCERN OF 'COMMONWEAL CATHOLICS'

THERE WOULD seem little more to be said about the religious controversy centering around Governor Mario Cuomo and the bishops. However, I believe there is one aspect of the controversy which has not been thoroughly examined and which is, I think, of special concern to *Commonweal* readers.

If being a "Commonweal Catholic" means anything it means that one sees a lay person's work in the world, his or her "lay vocation," to use an old term, as an integral part of the mission of the church to serve and save the world in the history of here and now. It also means that one sees the lay person's work as his or her responsibility — as that for which he or she has competence by reason of training and experience — and has respect for that "work in his secular milieu" [James O'Gara, *Commonweal*, March 23].

Whether one agrees with Governor Cuomo or not, what he has done is to demand, even force, respect for himself and his work. His work is governing in a pluralistic society. Currently he governs the second largest state in the union, a state of astonishing diversity in economic and ethnic groups. It is generally accepted that he may very well govern the entire country one day and that he may have the ambition to do so. He has the gifts of his vocation. He is also an unusually thoughtful politician and, as we know from his writings (some in the pages of *Commonweal*), has given a



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

great deal of thought to the practice of government. Government and politics, their enabling art or science, are his work in the world.

Mario Cuomo is a Catholic, in his own words "attached to the church first by birth, then by choice, now by love." He accepts, so he affirms, the teaching authority of the church on matters of doctrine, faith, and morals. As an American he also believes in the separation of church and state; nevertheless, as they must, religion and politics meet in the man. I think it can be fairly said that Governor Cuomo, like most Catholics in government, believes that the translation of morality into effective and sound law is the province of the politician. Unlike most politicians he is willing to contend for his right to that province. Understandably he took umbrage when the archbishop of New York "seemed" to say that no Catholic in good conscience could vote for any candidate who disagreed with the bishops — not on abortion — but on the political solution to the problem of abortion in our society. The archbishop seemed to interpret the decision not to support specific anti-abortion laws or a specific Constitutional amendment as acts "explicitly supporting abortion." Governor Cuomo interpreted the archbishop's statement as "saying that no Catholic can vote for Ed Koch, no Catholic can vote for Jay Goldin, for Carol Bellamy, nor for Pat Moynihan or Mario Cuomo. . . ." (One of his political gifts is to make clear what the concrete application of theory will mean.)

Let me remind readers of the origins of this discussion, if discussion it was. It was launched and carried on, until Governor Cuomo's speech at Notre Dame, in the public press. The archbishop's first remark was made to a reporter. The governor's reply was made via the *New York Times*. The second encounter was by means of a press statement issued by the archbishop (saying he had been misquoted and clarifying, but not really modifying, his position); this statement was commented on by the governor at a news conference. The third encounter was similarly indirect, and at a funeral. (Alas for Bishop Maginn who will probably never be recalled in Albany without reference to the exchange which almost literally took place over his body!)

WHAT DOES this say to the world which the whole church is called to serve? What does it say about a church which in its documents defines itself as the People of God? It says that there is a tragic disregard for the bonds which should unite its members in reverence and love. In a more concrete sense it says that there is no machinery for consulting with a lay person in a particular area of competence, and, in any case, little or no will to do so. In this instance there seems to have been a blatant disregard for the principle that "the citizen must cooperate with other citizens, using their own skills and *acting on their own responsibility* . . ." and that "the temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, *without the slightest detriment in its own proper laws*, it can be brought into conformity with the higher principles of Christian life and *adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place, and person*" (*Decree on the Laity, Vatican II* – (all italics mine).

Governor Cuomo, Congresswoman Ferraro, Senator Edward Kennedy and the others may or may not have stated their various cases well (cf. other discussions in *Commonweal* on this topic) but there is no doubt that, in the area in which they bear practical responsibility, they believe that to endorse the specific legislation apparently insisted upon by the bishops would be to the detriment of the laws proper to the temporal order in the shifting circumstances of this particular time in this particular place — the United States of America. Perhaps in a dialogue of respectful mutuality preparatory to any public statements, they might have come to modify their positions or come to state them differently. In a world in which bishops communicate with office-holders by making pointed jokes in homilies to which it would be unseemly to reply, we will certainly never know.

It is important to remember that Mario Cuomo does not differ with the bishops about the fact that abortion is wrong and sinful. His position stated in his own words is worth recalling:

"For me, life or fetal life in the womb should be protected . . . the full potential of human life is indisputably there. . . ." *But* "I believe that the legal interdicting of abortion by either the federal government or the individual states is not a plausible possibility . . . and wouldn't work."

It is also worth noting that Cuomo's insistence on his right to come to his conclusions in terms of his responsibility as a public official has brought about the debate asked for by the New England bishops. And in unexpected places. Says a *New Republic* editorial, "We do not normally commit theology, but then again neither, normally, do governors," and raises the bishops' own question: "Why does the pragmatic principle apply to abortion and not to civil rights?" The editorial is worth reading as a model of respectful inquiry into a thorny issue.

In the *Washington Post* editorial page writer William McPherson says in a column: "We are saying, as society has always said, that there are circumstances under which life is sacred and circumstances under which it is not. But let's call it what it clearly is: life. And in a civilized society, the decision to end it for whatever reason . . . ought to be not only troublesome but terrible in the first sense of the word: causing terror, fearful."

Are these the germs of a future consensus? If so, must we not be grateful to Governor Cuomo for "illuminating" the problem "in a refreshing and candid way" (*The New Republic*) as was his responsibility and his right?

ABIGAIL McCARTHY



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Church/world watch

# SDI: new technologies but old questions

## *J. Bryan Hehir*

TO THE dismay of some and with the endorsement of others, the debate about a defensive strategy against nuclear attack has been placed front and center. The impetus has been provided by President Reagan's March 1983 speech on a "Strategic Defensive Initiative" (SDI), but the debate includes a review of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 (ABM) and extends to the arena of Anti-Satellite Weapons (ASATs). The dimensions of the debate will be political, strategic, technological, and moral. In support of his SDI (i.e. "Star Wars") proposal Mr. Reagan recently said the United States had a "moral obligation" to develop such technology.

The defensive debate is not a new issue; it is an old question in new technological garb. The structure of the debate will follow the one which preceded the ABM Treaty from 1968 to 1972. The political, strategic, and moral questions remain remarkably the same while the technological question has changed. Technologies under discussion today were not envisioned in the late sixties.

The technological dimension of the Strategic Defensive Initiative debate will be its leading characteristic in the 1980s. The division among the experts is deep and the details of the technological argument are dense. Ambassador Gerard Smith who negotiated the ABM Treaty for the Nixon administration calls the Star Wars proposal a "crucial illusion." But Secretary Weinberger has spoken confidently of building a "thoroughly reliable and total" mode of defense against nuclear weapons. The technicians are arrayed behind these positions with intricate debates about "boost phase interception" of missiles, "mid-course kill capabilities," and laser vs. particle beam weapons. Even those who professionally follow the nuclear debate and have mastered the alphabet of acronyms from ABM to NPT may have difficulty following the technological debate about SDI.

But the policy decisions about SDI cannot be left to the technicians. In spite of some loose claims about "total defense" no one in the technical debate believes that foolproof defense against nuclear attack is possible in the foreseeable future. Hence the decisions to proceed with less than perfect defense should not be made simply because the technology today is new and better than that of the 1960s and 1970s. The technological discussion must go forward but it should be interpreted in light of broader political, strategic, and moral arguments.

The moral case used today in support of SDI is identical to the one espoused in support of ABM in the late sixties. Essentially it is an argument against mutual assured destruction, which stressed the primacy of offensive weapons and held open the possibility/necessity of targeting civilian centers. The defensive option is morally superior, it is claimed, because it targets weapons not people (a valid point) and because it aims to insulate the world from nuclear danger (a more problematical claim). The strength of the defensive option has always been the *intention* guiding the policy; the vulnerability has been the *consequences* of trying to implement the policy. A morality of consequences is never a sufficient moral assessment of nuclear policy, but it is a necessary dimension of any moral evaluation.

Assessing the consequences of pursuing the SDI moves the moral discussion to a consideration of the political and strategic arguments about defensive systems. The political argument turns on an intuition about the nature of nuclear weapons and the impact of pursuing defensive policies. I use the term intuition because at the foundation of every nuclear policy debate is a basic perception of the nature of nuclear weapons. Have nuclear weapons essentially changed our notions of politics and strategy or have they simply made the classical calculations more complicated? Does the classical idea of "defense" mean anything in the nuclear age or is "deterrence" (a quite different notion) the best we can do? The advocates of defensive systems, in their expansive moments, seem to believe deterrence can be replaced by defense. Their critics argue that pursuit of defensive strategies ignores the qualitative change which occurred in the nuclear revolution. This debate about the nature of nuclear weapons leads to differing views of the strategic impact which the SDI will have on the arms race.

The critics of SDI contend that its strategic outcome will not be a displacement of the offensive threat to each superpower, as Mr. Reagan hopes, but a combined offensive and defensive race. Each defensive measure, it is feared, will breed new offensive countermeasures. The cost will be astronomical — estimates run to $1 trillion for defensive systems alone. The pursuit of both defense and offense can kill the ABM Treaty, doom the fragile hopes for a Comprehensive Test Ban and foreclose the possibility of banning Anti-Satellite Weapons. This debate on politics, technology, morals, and strategy is destined to continue. Final answers are not in order at the moment, but it is clear that one need not be an enthusiastic supporter of the present offensive arms race to be quite unenthusiastic about opening the defensive frontier. J. BRYAN HEHIR

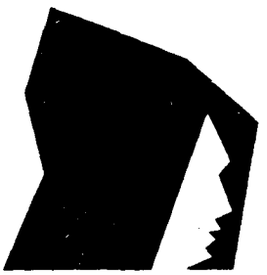
*(J. Bryan Hehir was recently appointed senior research scholar at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics and research professor of ethics and international politics at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown.)*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Merton we knew

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS BY THREE OF HIS FRIENDS



## W.H. FERRY

## 'Always going to be a monk'

W.H. FERRY, *a founder of The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, is the author of numerous articles and books, including* The Zaca Manifesto *and* Letters from Tom *(Fort Hill Press).*

THE PICTURE of Tom Merton that many people have is one of a monk who wrote marvelously affecting, marvelously instructive books of solemn and profound religious importance. I didn't see very much of that. I saw the other side. I saw a concerned citizen. A beer-drinking good fellow out taking pictures of barns and cemeteries and roots and things like that. A man who liked to walk in the woods and talk. A man who was furious with the way the world was going, and couldn't wait to tell people of his fury.

Ours was a friendship I never wholly understood. I didn't have much to offer him, and didn't have his intellectual hardware. I suppose it was our mutual concern about the state of the world that was at the bottom of it. But our times together were never heavy or burdensome. Tom was merry and very good company; his language was lively, abrupt.

I first went to see Tom about four or five months after he wrote to the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions saying he liked what we had produced, and that he'd like to participate in some way. He was a legend even in 1961.

I don't remember everything about our first meeting, but I do remember that he said, "Come to the back gate and bring some beer and a couple of sandwiches and we'll go off and take some pictures and sit and talk."

He was just beginning to write on secular issues, and he said he was delighted to see me, to meet the source of so many remarkable documents the Center had sent to him. Merton was the country's principal document-gobbler. He read everything and anything.

His was as capacious a mind as I've ever encountered. As a monk he had only little hunks of time to write. But in two or three hours it's amazing the cogent gems he could turn out. He was an exceptionally sensitive man, as well as an exceptionally religious man. The race situation, the bomb — he saw the consequences clearly and early, and from a place so far out of the mainstream. He was years ahead of almost everybody in his concern that the machines were going to take over, the whole business of dehumanization. And he was quite right.

Okay, so all this stuff is bubbling around in the mind of a cloistered Trappist monk who is supposed to live a very circumscribed life. You might imagine that he would have his problems. Once I asked him about his vows, and he smiled and said, "Ping, poverty, that's a cinch. Chastity, well that takes a little getting used to, but that's manageable. Obedience, that's the bugger."

His most serious problems with that "bugger" started at the time the first forays were being made into Vietnam. He never quite knew where the pressure came from. His understanding of it was that it started with ecclesiastical higher-ups in Washington. He was aware that a lot had been stirred up by some of the things he had been writing about, war and peace, and pacifism, and the duties of Christians. But when his abbot said stop, he did. "I'm not going to go any further," he said. "It will not do any good, it will just cause a commotion that won't be good for anybody concerned, including the church."

This was a prudential judgment. He wasn't backing off, he just knew this too would pass, as it did pass, and all of the materials he was so concerned about getting out during the sixties, did appear, and were just as worthy when they came out later.

But, believe me, there was a lot of impatience and a lot of huffing and puffing on his part about this; he didn't like it one bit. Not because he was looking for fame but because he felt people should be aware of what was going on.

© 1984 by Paul Wilkes, from the forthcoming book *Merton: By Those Who Knew Him Best*, to be published by Harper & Row, San Francisco.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When he couldn't publish officially, it made quite a change in my life. He asked me, and I suppose others, in effect to be a bootlegger for him. The *nihil obstat* rule ran only against magazine articles, books, and such things. He was allowed to send around mimeographed copies. I would take these mimeographed copies and distribute them. He furnished me with lists, and I had a good many lists of my own. He warned me against allowing his essays to be printed without permission, but he didn't warn me very hard. I had a red-hot Xerox machine.

There were our mutual social concerns, there was this special relationship that we had once he was censored. And then there was the incident in 1966 that made me see that he was not only a religious, moral figure, but a man, simply unadorned, a man. It was at that time when he was under a lot of attack from within the church, outside the church, and even from members of his own order. He was having his usual stomach problems, and on top of that his back was giving him terrible pain. I think it was one of the lowest points in his life. He was fifty years old, and he was vulnerable.

Tom called me, and very rarely did he do that. He asked me to come as soon as I could to the monastery — he had something to talk to me about. And he said, "Bring a lot of change — bring a pocketful of change." I couldn't imagine what this was all about. He told me in the car that he wanted to call a woman he had met recently. "I'm just terribly taken by her." Well, I was flabbergasted.

We went about twelve miles away, and we stopped at a gas station which had one of those phone kiosks outside. Tom rushed over and then came back. The line was busy. And over two or three hours he rushed back and forth to that phone just like any man exasperated because he couldn't get hold of his girl. Well, it took quite a long while, quite a few hours, quite a few busy signals, and he finally gave up.

We went off and sat and talked. There's one very serious proposal that he made which cannot be regarded very seriously today, but he said, "What I want to do is go away with this woman for a month. Just for a month. What do you think of that?" I said, "Tom, are you out of your mind?" "Well," he said, "what's wrong with it?" I said, "What do your superiors have to say about this?" He said, "I don't think I'd consult them very much. I could do this. There wouldn't be any publicity about it." And I said, "There wouldn't be any publicity? You'd just disappear from the monastery, and this woman would just disappear from wherever she comes from, and the world would pay no attention to this?" He said, "You think there'd be any publicity?" And I said, "I'm sure there would. I'm absolutely sure." "Well," he said, "that isn't what I wanted to hear. Do you suppose there's any way of handling it?" And I said, "On this I'm going to fail you because if there were a way of handling it, I wouldn't help you. I think this is a mistake. I'm not being moral about it, I think it's just a big mistake."

We talked about it a lot more and he said, "You've given me something to think about."

But I left the next day; we had about two hours together. The only thing he said was, "Thanks for the conversation. I got hold of her this morning. Thank you." I never knew how it all came out, or how he settled with himself. All I know is that this woman, whoever she was, was a remarkably sensitive, terribly nice person. She managed her side of this very well. I'm sure she did nothing to bring this on, so to speak. I saw Tom many times after that, but the matter was never mentioned again.

WHEN I saw Tom in 1968 just as he was about to leave for Asia, it was obvious he had reconciled things and was generally in much better spirits. He was full of a sort of quiet joy. He smiled a great deal, laughed a great deal.

We headed north, up the coast to look for a spot for a possible hermitage for him; he had an idea that if he could live away from Gethsemani for a time he'd like a place high above the Pacific Ocean. We went on and on and finally I drove him across twenty miles of the worst road in northern California to get out to the coast. There was an open spot where the road ended. We got out of the car and walked over to the bluff and there was the great Pacific in front of us. Tom Merton was grinning from ear to ear. We walked another twenty yards and looked down from the bluff to see condominiums, a golf course, and restaurants being constructed right down below us.

Oh, that look on his face. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. "Ah," he said, "let's go back. This isn't the place."

There is so much talk about Tom's wanting to get away from Gethsemani, that he was plain sick of it. I don't think that Tom ever outgrew Gethsemani. He said to me what he said to others: "I'm always going to be a monk of Gethsemani." Perhaps if he had lived, he would have spent time in other hermitages, but he knew his true home.

## ROBERT LAX

# Freedom to become Merton

ROBERT LAX, *a poet now living in Greece, maintained a long and consistent friendship and a lively correspondence with Thomas Merton. Some of that exchange of letters has been collected in* A Catch of Anti-Letters *(Andrews McMeel).*

IN 1934, when Merton and I were at Columbia, it was a place of great intellectual stimulation. Classes were held by some of the greatest teachers of our time. We really had to take our lives and our work seriously. We wanted to be making some sense within the social pattern. And there were plenty of people who were examples to us, to keep us at that: people like Meyer Shapiro who was teaching art history, and Mark Van Doren who would keep us remembering the world. If we went up to the woods, to Olean, to work, it was because we felt we could do something that was going in the opposite direction from the whole commercial world. We'd already had our



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brushes with that world, and we didn't like it, didn't like the standards we'd have to conform to in order to move ahead in that world. A lot of things were happening that none of us was aware of, and that Merton wasn't aware of.

Right after my graduation from college we both went up to Olean. At some point on that trip I said that I had been interested in Neo-Thomism and the things that Richard McKeon and Mortimer Adler were doing out in Chicago, and Thomistic thought in general. This was in June of '38. Merton said that if there was one thing that he wasn't much interested in, in the whole world of philosophy and religion, it was that tradition. But that summer when he went back, he started reading Gilson and Gerard Manley Hopkins, and suddenly a lot of Catholic books were just falling into his hands. By November he was being baptized at Corpus Christi Church.

I think the feeling of God's concern for the world is what drew him to Catholicism; God's mercy towards sinners made a very strong appeal. It seems to me he was supernaturally moved toward all of this because he'd be sitting in his room reading and suddenly he hears a voice inside him saying: "Go to Mass." And soon after that he hears a voice saying: "Go and become a Catholic," or "Go and talk to Father Ford about becoming a Catholic." And he wasn't given to hearing voices. I don't know how to describe what voice he heard, but it was certainly a strong impulse to do this. He just couldn't resist it; he couldn't say no.

**I think he was looking for a direction in life. I think if a tree is looking for a direction in life, it's just hoping to become a tree. And I think that what Merton was hoping to become was completely a human being, or completely Thomas Merton. I think that was moving him all the time, and any decisions he made really were leading toward that, and he hoped that they would lead him toward that.**

I think that he felt blocked at one point or another in the choices that were offered him, say, by the university or by the world or anything else; and that if later he was drawn to the monastery, it was because he could see a kind of freedom there — paradoxical — but a kind of freedom in which he could grow and become fully the thing that he must have felt he was potentially. And so what he was after was to become himself.

Once he was in the monastery, whatever success he had was for the greater glory of God. I think that he was fulfilling his vocation in that way, and he was glad to see it happen. And I think he really turned himself inside out in his books because he felt that was his vocation, too. He wanted to make it quite clear that this is what happens when a man is alive and struggling and conscious and articulate about it. And that was because he was going through it — not just for himself, but for many people.

When I was traveling, I'd meet theological students and people like that who had just encountered his books for the first time, and they'd always say, "He was talking as though he was talking from inside of me." He was so much inside himself that he was inside of everyone. And they always felt a very personal bond with him for that reason.

He had a strong social conscience when I first knew him at Columbia; **he was certainly interested in the problems of the whole world. Even at his most solitary and contemplative period, his early entry into Gethsemani, he was still conscious of the problems of the world. But as he settled in, all these things came back, and he realized that he could deal with them from within the monastery.**

I THINK THAT all the things happening at the end of the fifties and through the sixties in America certainly got to him because he was in touch with key people in all the movements, corresponding with them in a very lively responsible way. He knew, I think, he couldn't say, "Don't get into action, just live a contemplative life in a limited sense." He realized that contemplation and action go together, and he could see a way of combining the two.

Six months before he left for Asia he wrote in a journal he was keeping: "In our monasticism we have been content to find our way to a kind of peace, a simple, undisturbed, thoughtful life. And this is certainly good, but is it good enough? I for one realize that now I need more. Not simply to be quiet, somewhat productive, to pray, to read, to cultivate leisure. There is a need of effort, deepening change and transformation. . . . I have a past to break with. An accumulation of inertia, waste, wrong, foolishness, rot, junk. A great need of clarification, of mindfulness, or rather, of no-mind. A return to genuine practice, right effort. Need to push on to the great doubt. Need for the spirit. Hang on to the clear light." I was quite rocked by the news of his death, but I didn't feel a maudlin thing about it at all. I felt that he'd gone on to another stage, and I really felt that if it happened, it must have been the time for it. I think probably most of his friends felt that way. I'm sure the monks pretty much did.

## JOHN EUDES BAMBERGER

# Wrestling with God

DOM JOHN EUDES BAMBERGER, O.C.S.O., *a physician and abbot of Our Lady of Genesee Abbey, Piffard, New York, was a novice under Thomas Merton.*

THE MONASTIC vocation is mysterious. As an abbot, I speak to many people who see me when they think they have a vocation. One finds there are as many different stories as there are people. But there are some common threads. The monastic life appeals to people who have had some awakening that makes them feel that living in a way that doesn't go to the heart of life is a waste of time.

I think that for Thomas Merton the experience of being forgiven by God was one of his deepest experiences. It wouldn't appear normally because usually he gave the impression of being a rather carefree, happy-go-lucky, freewheeling type of person. But, when you knew him well, there always



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was this awareness that he had been very bad off at one time. He would indicate this by some sudden word, some touching sign of sympathy that was spontaneous and simple. It is a fact that quite early he was all but homeless for all practical purposes and that prior to entering the monastery he felt he had lost what was best in his life, his human innocence. As he had a passion for spiritual beauty later on, he had a passionate nature for all kinds of things, and he'd indulged it too much. But he never totally identified with that: he always believed in innocence. And somehow he was able, because of the experience of God, to believe that God had recreated his innocence.

I think it began when he went to Rome. He had two very profound experiences there. One in his hotel room one night when his father, who had died not so very long before, was suddenly in the room with him. Somehow, knowing his father was still alive, was spiritually present, began to change him.

And then when he continued his stay in Rome, visiting churches, the basilicas, many of which have Byzantine mosaics. In standing before them as a tourist and an aesthete, the religious content of those mosaics began to influence him.

I think it was a gradual thing, but I think he had an encounter with God and sensed that God knew him at his worst and his best, and that God loved him, that he was a sinner whom God had found and forgiven and made a son.

MERTON was a very different type from the image he projected in his writings. He was a very outgoing person with an obvious ease in relationships, very approachable, with a great sense of humor. He had tremendous energy and dynamism. Almost anything that he took a liking to he became enthusiastic about. His books give the impression of a person who was on top of things, and who had a very involved but balanced vision.

There was a great openness about him and yet a concealed reserve. At times one would be aware that he was going through a considerable struggle about some aspect or other of life, because he was inclined not to hide it; that was part of his way. He'd express some complaint about our work, for example, or the dryness of long periods in the choir. He felt you should let it all come out, not wrap your cowl around you and submerge. Yet, he was very reticent to talk about the deepest things, for example, his experience with prayer. You'll find there was nothing directly stated about that in any of his writings or tapes.

He didn't worry too much about what might happen if he said what he felt and thought, what impression it might give. I think that was part of his mystique at Gethsemani. He felt that you did what you must and life would eventually correct itself. If you did that with whatever seemed real when it came up, then you'd eventually be more true and complete as a person.

When he was down it was heavy. I remember meeting him in the woods when his bearing exuded melancholy but that was uncommon. Usually he came through as being full of energy and enthusiasm. If you were going through a hard period, he would pick it up very quickly and respond to it with a profound intensity. He was very responsive to human suffering.

A great deal has been said about Merton and the problem of authority, his struggles with superiors in the order, Dom James Fox in particular, his abbot for some twenty years. It's important to put that in the context of a monastic vocation. There were periods when Merton felt that the abbot was too narrow. I think he also felt that he was being used at times. Actually, there were periods when I think Merton would have been extremely difficult for anyone to deal with. He often saw things before they were very clear to anyone else. When you're an abbot you can't just think of only the person you're dealing with, but of the way a decision will influence or be perceived by others.

Merton often felt that his views were clear and obvious, and he was prepared to fight for them. He believed in them, and he did have a lot of courage. At times that's hard to handle. He was challenging also because of his background and temperament. He was a man who had a deep need to know that he was appreciated and loved, stronger than average. (One reason he felt there was tension between himself and the community after he moved to the hermitage, I think, was simply the fact that there was markedly reduced contact, and little opportunity for those small, daily signs of friendliness and acceptance that are so important. He needed that.) But, at the same time, he was a very independent type. He had to be. His mother died when he was six, and his father was an artist who would suddenly decide to go off to North Africa and leave his son behind. So he had to become emotionally free, and probably more than he should have had to be as a young boy.

I think part of his extroverted ways was an expression of his need to be appreciated, to be loved, as perhaps he never had been. That's where he was complex. He also needed silence and solitude, but when he was in a crowd he was very quickly the center, even if people didn't know who he was.

I THINK THAT late in his life Merton was quite weary of community life. He was grumbling more than usual. When he became a hermit it was very important to him because he was gifted for prayer and solitude and silence. But I believe he was not suited to be a hermit. He was never able to face that fact, and I believe that instead of facing it he took it out on the community.

I knew Merton probably as well as anyone. I was his physician for a long time. I saw him at his worst physically, and often emotionally. But I never saw him bitter. I often saw him distressed, but when you would pin him down on things, he was a man of very deep faith, and he was tough.

Merton had various health problems toward the end of his life. I remember one day he came up to me in the infirmary — it was during his period as a hermit when he used to chop wood — and he told me he had a numbness in his hand. I thought that he might have a cervical disc impingement, and sent him into the hospital. And that it was. It didn't respond well to conservative treatment and required surgery, which was painful. He had other continuing ailments, stomach problems, digestive problems, and some allergies. Why did he have those things? That's kind of mysterious. Was it part of the tension that came



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with his struggles? In my years at Gethsemani his health problems were pretty much in the background, except toward 1966 and 1967, during his hermit period.

He was fifty-three years old the last time I saw him, full of energy and enthusiasm as usual, and his death came as quite a shock. I think all of us who knew him well felt we had lost a brother. But on the other hand, death came at a good time for him. He had faced the deep conflicts he had been struggling with for an extended period, and he had worked them through. I felt that if he had died suddenly it was fortunate it was not six months earlier, or a year earlier. And from that point of view I felt that his death expressed a good deal of continuity with his monastic life, in the sense that he had resolved some of the tensions about his vocation.

The contemplative life encounters each of us at the point where we are most fully ourselves, but also uncertain of who we really are. It's always a challenge. I think that was why it stayed alive for Merton. He was wrestling with God, and there was always more to God than he could ever master.

## Screen

# MOZART & MURDER

### 'AMADEUS' & 'A SOLDIER'S STORY'

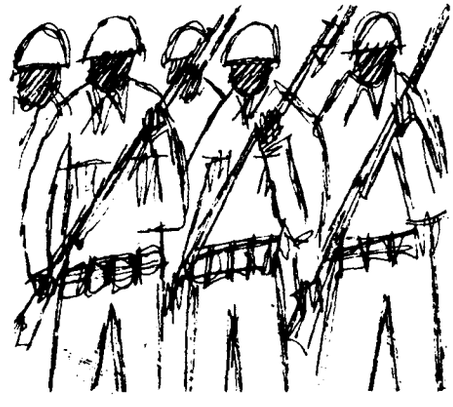
MUSIC, APPROPRIATELY, dominates the film *Amadeus*, redeems its weaknesses, and raises it at last to some tragic heights. The music is far more than a mere score, even more than a figurative "extra character." Music is the story in *Amadeus*, or at least the best part of it. From the first, director Milos Forman, aided by conductor Neville Marriner, coordinates his images with Mozart's lesser known serenades, then piano concertos, and finally the operas that so revolutionized wooden heroic traditions ("Who would you rather hear," Mozart asks Emperor Joseph II, "your hairdresser or Hercules?"). Although we hear much of this music set against exquisite Prague backgrounds, or watch its performance in the very Tyl theater where Mozart first conducted *Don Giovanni*, we experience it most powerfully when it is set in the minds of Mozart and his rival Salieri. At one moment, for example, the latter picks up one of Mozart's unblotted sheets, the tune flourishes, and Salieri begins to cry. Later Mozart is seen composing the somber opening bars of the *Requiem*, so absorbed that he cannot hear loud knocking on the door; when his attention is finally jarred, the musical prayer dies mid-chord, like a recording unplugged. Such interiorization of the score in *Amadeus* makes the music not background, but inscape.

To create *Amadeus*, Peter Schaffer, who wrote both play and film, has freely mixed fact and fiction, perhaps too much so. The fact — though considerably exaggerated — involves Mozart's character, who some apparently still conceive of as an eighteenth-century goody-two-shoes who tapped in two-fourths time. That Mozart of popular iconography was a fiction, an invention of his widow to upgrade his reputation, and of nineteenth-century music critics to discipline the even wilder bohemians of their time. In truth, Mozart was no saint, but often a crude, boisterous South German who could crack vulgar jokes as easily as crank out splendid tunes. Tom Hulce, who plays Mozart in *Amadeus*, is cast to shock; he has a callow, almost vacuous face and a nervous high-pitched giggle; when we first see him, he's pinioning a buxom lass beneath a banquet table. Appropriately, perhaps, Hulce's last movie was *Animal House*.

To this revision, Schaffer has added a tale of murder and spiritual corruption. He fixes on the somber, dedicated Antonio Salieri, court composer for the Hapsburgs, as a mediocrity who becomes so consumed by jealousy that he contrives to destroy what he calls "the creature." Salieri rails at God's injustice; Salieri himself has observed all the proprieties but composes mere drivel; he observes Mozart's obscenities and wonders how "the creature" can write "as though taking down dictation" from on high.

In the play — which I did not see — Salieri apparently dominated; his jealousy, by all accounts, was believable and frighteningly demonic. In the movie, however, it seems warmed over; we listen to Salieri as he recalls the rivalry thirty years later in a lunatic asylum after a suicide attempt. Although F. Murray Abraham fills the old man's voice with passion, it gradually seems like mere ranting in this context, and far more convincing only when we see him, in his earlier days, plotting Mozart's downfall. In *that* context, however, he must compete against Mozart's music — present as mere tape-recording in the theater. In the film, the rivalry seems a one-sided battle; Salieri appears much less a neoclassical Iago than the mediocrity he confesses to be.

When Salieri's demonic power declines, moreover, Schaffer's fictions seem more suspect; an invention to express a powerful theme is one thing, a contrivance to express a banality another. Salieri, of course, might have been jealous of Mozart, but there is no evidence that he plotted against him. Mozart was wild, to be sure, but not great *despite* his nature; he read and studied in his trade, particularly in Bach, no favorite at a time when Baroque seriousness and structure had gone out of style. Absolute historical accuracy isn't required, of course, but Schaffer has to stretch in too many directions to





LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

press his thesis-like symmetry of primitive genius and cerebral failure.

Hulce, who improves with time, and Abraham, a Broadway veteran, are ably assisted in the film by Jeffrey Jones. As the emperor, Jones provides some unexpected comic relief by his awkward geniality, his love of music but atrocious playing, and his affectionate references to "my sister Antoinette" off in France. Far less successful are other supporting members of the cast: principally a shrill Elizabeth Berridge as Mozart's wife Constanze; a young priest who hears Salieri's story and has nothing to offer but deadpan horror; and assorted imperial musicians, who alternately snicker or dodder in clichéd fashion as they menace or feel threatened by "the creature."

Nevertheless, I left *Amadeus* moved. The film closes with Mozart composing the *Dies Irae* of the *Requiem*, or rather, issuing instructions from a deathbed from which he can no longer rise. "*Voca me*," he gasps, urging Salieri, whom he trusts, to write in some soft soprano voices to counterpoint the harsh percussion and trumpet notes of the "*confutatis maledictis*" phrase. "*Voca me*," Hulce repeats, as if beseeching God to call him. It was powerful, far more expressive of spiritual truth than Salieri's complaints about God's fairness.

*A SOLDIER'S STORY* is a spare, literate, and at times powerful version of *A Soldier's Play*, Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winner of several years back. Like Peter Schaffer with *Amadeus*, Fuller has written the screenplay for the movie, and, for the most part, he and director Norman Jewison have avoided the peril of producing a mere filmed piece of theater. Although the conclusion lacked the punch its menacing development promised, *A Soldier's Story* is the most trenchant study of racism in recent film, providing some talented black actors with a rare chance to do something more than play the comic fool. They make full opportunity.

The movie combines the talents of Howard Rollins, Jr., who stole the show in a supporting role in *Ragtime*, and the Negro Ensemble Company, which manned Fuller's stage presentation. Rollins plays the ramrod-stiff Captain William Davenport, a black lawyer sent to a Louisiana army camp in 1944 to investigate the murder of a black non-com, Sergeant Vernon Waters. The company plays the murdered man's platoon, a team of baseball players who have never seen a black officer before and who eye Rollins with worshipful gawking — before he begins to interrogate them, that is. They are convinced the Klan did it; their white commanding officers, suspecting something similar, want Davenport to go home. It seems an investigation doomed to go nowhere.

Where it does go involves both suspense and surprise beyond the usual materials of the inquiry genre. White antagonism to blacks is everywhere evident. With a few brief touches — a bus with black soldiers in the back, signs labeled "whites only," and suspicious natives offended at Davenport's presence — we are reminded of a world that, whatever else remains the same, is thankfully gone. But as Davenport interviews the platoon about their attitude toward Sergeant Waters, he discovers not only oppression but tensions among the oppressed. What emerges is not just whodunit, and that key to detective fiction, a motive, but competing visions of black history and future prospects.

The core of the movie becomes the sergeant's character, and that in turn becomes both its strength and weakness. Waters's main purpose in life, we discover in flashback, is not military but racial; he wants to make inferior blacks suffer and fail, and then, when they fall behind, to gloat that "there's one less fool for the race to be ashamed of." Played by an actor with the fortuitous name of Adolph Caesar, Sergeant Waters esteems the avowed enemy that his troops are so willing to fight, the little corporal in Germany and *his* plans for racial purification. Waters, in short, is no Uncle Tom but a harsh disciple of Darwin, claiming that the only way for blacks to rival whites is to exterminate any vestige of a "lazy, shiftless" past. Caesar gives a harsh, mean performance, thoroughly believable, disgusting, and, at last, pitiable.

But Waters's dominance also involves a problem, an overreliance on flashbacks that wrecks the film's balance in its second half. At first the flashbacks work to heighten the mystery and suspense, and keep the relationships clear. But they become bulky and overlong; they are also obviously predictable. When Davenport encounters a white captain who has suppressed some evidence about some other white officers and demands, "Tell me what they told you," we have to take a deep breath, as in *Sophie's Choice*, before another contrived dip into the past.

The flashbacks, moreover, tend to bury Davenport as a focus of attention. The Sergeant's tale is so absorbing that we are bound to lose some interest in the captain, but this is worsened when the screenplay leaves little for Rollins to do but discover the murderer, then go home. Davenport relates to the story as a lawyer and soldier but not as a black, leaving an emotional gap at the close; one aches for someone to articulate the irony that Waters's racism implies or to express some creative sense of the relationship between history and the future. All Rollins is given to do is to cry by a window. The events are worth tears, to be sure, but they deserve more.

TOM O'BRIEN

# Stage

## PLEASANT DREAMS

### DIAGNOSTIC, NOT CURATIVE

ANYONE WHO remembers the drunken sergeants in *Streamers* knows that playwright David Rabe can be funny, but the laughter in *Streamers* is laced with anguish and ugliness; the mannerisms that make Sgt. Rooney a comic caricature in Act I kill him in Act II. *Hurlyburly* is often a funny play, but in context the funniness is almost unnerving. The play is sprinkled with witty lines—verbal exercises in aggression, self-deprecation, incongruity—and with



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

platitudes of psychology and self-help that trail off into syntactical incoherence. I can imagine an audience laughing easily and openly at *Hurlburly*, borrowing the defenses but not the pain of the characters and turning them into satiric butts instead of sufferers. On the night I saw the play, however, the laughter came—as I think it should—in sudden bursts that dwindled into ragged titters as though individuals in the audience were surprised into laughter, surprised at their laughter and surprised that the laugh had turned sour before it was finished.

The most overtly comic character in the play is Bonnie, a nude dancer with mild pretensions and boundless accessibility. Beautifully played by Judith Ivey, Bonnie does an hilarious scene in which she strips out of her clothes, including her panty hose, while she storms around the room hurling abuse at Eddie, the play's protagonist. The hilarity is colored by the fact that she is stripping so that she can clean the cuts and bruises she sustained when Eddie's friend Phil threw her out of a moving car. The classic laugh at the slip on the banana peel rests in our not having to see the contusions. We see them in *Hurlburly*.

The play takes place in a house in the Hollywood Hills shared by Eddie and Mickey, usually infested by Phil and Artie (everyone's favorite butt) and by the women they pass around. All of the men work in the movies and television and all of them have broken marriages and displaced children. At the end of Act II, Phil, who is more demented than eccentric, comes in with his baby whom he has just stolen from his ex-wife's home, and the four men play a sentimental curtain scene which is undercut by a joke as old as the sentiment, one that is transformed by Artie's saying that the child dumped on him, like all the broads he ever knew. The characters in the play are sustained, insofar as they are sustained, by drugs, drink, sex (so long as no serious commitment is involved), and convoluted chatter as empty and urgent as any you can hear on call-in radio shows. Eddie is the central figure, the character onstage for most of the three-hours playing time. William Hurt gives a marvelous performance, catching the charm that almost masks Eddie's contempt for others and for himself which helps to explain why these crippled moths hover around his dying flame. Eddie tells Phil that the only reason he is ever hired is as a prop, bringing a touch of realism to the fakery of television. He develops the metaphor, seeing all the other characters as unfeeling background to the one-man drama of his meaningless life—and himself as décor for them. These characters are drawn to one another out of a need that can never be fulfilled. There is no family here, no community, no society, and Eddie actively disintegrates any hint of it by using his amiable malevolence to push the others away, thereby protecting his indifference.

Whenever Eddie harps on the nuclear bomb and other large and small horrors that fill the daily newspapers, I get momentarily uneasy. I fear that at any minute Rabe will do a cause-effect routine and ask me to weep for Eddie because, gee, where else can you go but to cocaine and booze when God is not in his heaven and all's wrong with the world. "A lot of what's dark in the play doesn't come from California," Rabe said in a *New York Times* interview (June 28, 1984). "It comes from being in the world today, being barraged with information—philosophies that aren't philosophies, answers that aren't answers, one pharmaceutical solution after another." From the beginning, Rabe's plays have suggested that life is an uncomfortable encampment on the edge of an abyss. He clearly intends his Hollywood Hills coven, like his barracks group in *Streamers*, to stand for more than their untidy selves. Yet, he is tough enough to know that his characters are helping to furnish the decaying house in which they live. Chrissy, the pathetic heroine of *Boom Boom Room* (all three women in *Hurlyburly* are Chrissy's sisters under the skin), conspires, consciously or accidentally, in her own destruction. Donna, the wafty waif in *Hurlyburly*, tries to explain Eddie's presumed concern for the unknown-victims-out-there by telling him that everything is part of everything else. Hers is not the positive statement it might be under other circumstances. It is a recognition—Rabe's, if not Donna's—that the philosophies, the answers, the pharmaceutical solutions are accepted by the characters, and their use of these palliatives helps frame the world from which they need protection.

If Rabe were the political playwright he is sometimes taken to be, he would use his situation to point out possible escape routes for his characters and for society. His business is diagnostic not curative. *Hurlyburly* is another instance—if an often


*Commonweal's '84*

**Trial Subscription Offer —**

**11 issues for $9**

**OFFER FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY**

**COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave.**
**New York, N.Y. 10016**

**Please send the next 6 months of *Commonweal* to:**

**Name** _____

**Address** _____

**City, State, Zip** _____

☐ **I prefer a full subscription at $24.** 10/19/84




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

funny one—of Rabe's dim view of human possibility. At the end of the play, Donna settles on the couch, her head on Eddie's shoulder, and prepares to sleep. It is an image that another play might use in a positive way, but there is no replenishment in her, "Pleasant dreams." Eddie registers her words and stares off into space in a final, almost soft moment that has no more comfort in it than in the happy music at the end of Rabe's *Sticks and Bones* or the singing of "Beautiful Streamers" in mock Korean at the end of *Streamers*.

GERALD WEALES

# Books: MANY MERTONS, MANY MEADS

**THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS OF THOMAS MERTON**

**Michael Mott**

**Houghton Mifflin, $24.95, 674 pp.**

**FOLLOW THE ECSTASY: THOMAS MERTON**

THE HERMITAGE YEARS 1965-1968

**John Howard Griffin**

**JHG Editions/Latitudes Press, $15, 230 pp.**

**William H. Shannon**

THE MERTON "industry" keeps growing. The first dissertation on Merton's writings appeared the year before his death. In the sixteen years since that tragic death, some ninety dissertations have, for better or worse, graced the halls of academe; in addition a sizable number of books, of varying quality, have rolled off the printing presses. Merton scholarship does indeed exist and, I hope, grows better as time goes on.

It needs to be said, though, that up to now that scholarship has lacked any real center or focus. By "center or focus" I mean an objective and well-balanced portrayal of Thomas Merton, based on all the available sources of information about him, that could serve a normative role for Merton studies. Michael Mott's *Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton* does, I believe, fulfill this need. First of all, his book may be called normative in somewhat the same sense that it is "official." As the biographer appointed by the Merton Legacy Trust, he had access to all unpublished Merton material—which is not available to other scholars. Secondly—and more importantly—the care, sensitivity, and discernment with which he has handled *all* the Merton material justify the judgment that we have in

this book as genuine and authentic a presentation of the *real* Merton as is presently possible. It was no easy task to write a biography of Thomas Merton. Merton knew the value of simplicity, but he was not a simple man. There are many facets to his person. His interests ranged far and wide, his enthusiasms were boundless, his energies enormous. Who else would read Meister Eckhart while recovering from a painful operation in the hospital? Who else would write 4,000 letters to over a thousand correspondents, protesting all the while that he needed to stop writing letters? Who else but Merton would make contact with Boris Pasternak and then try to learn Russian in order to communicate with him in his own language? Who else but this monk would fall in love with a young woman, try to keep that love secret, yet let ever so many friends in on the secret, and when finally they parted, give her as a farewell gift a journal complete with title telling the day by day story of his love for her (and besides deposit with his

*(Continued on page 562)*

**MARGARET MEAD**

A LIFE

**Jane Howard**

**Simon & Schuster, $19.95, 527 pp.**

**Bradd Shore**

HOW to observe the quintessential observer: this is the challenge that Jane Howard has taken on in her fascinating biography of Margaret Mead. Howard's approach is to assemble Margaret Mead outside-in, through the accumulated reminiscences of others.

The book is subtitled "A Life," no doubt ironically. Mead seems to have lived enough lives for several ordinary mortals. During half-a-century Mead undertook major field work in seven different societies, wrote or edited almost forty books and over a thousand articles both scholarly and popular. In her spare time she nurtured an astonishing network of "intimate" relationships from every corner of her life. *Margaret Mead: A Life* runs over 500 pages and is packed with revealing details. Yet for all Howard's virtues as a journalist, Margaret Mead remains curiously elusive. Without denying her passionate attachments, we sense in Mead's social relations a shadowy detachment and an inarticulate loneliness. She seems almost to caricature the anthropologist, the awkward participant-observer alone among crowds.

Howard describes Mead's autobiography *Blackberry Winter* as "an engaging book but an evasive one which asked nearly as many questions as it answered, and did not say enough about how its author managed to shift gears as often as she did, personally and professionally, without destroying her transmission." Fond of recommending the benefits of psychoanalysis to her friends, Mead



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exempted herself from clinical observation. "For the upper ten percent of the upper ten percent, she once contended, there is no analyst."

It is tempting to read such personal detachment into Mead's own mothering: she was absent for much of her daughter's childhood. Yet Mary Catherine Bateson was left in the good and loving hands of a devoted extended "family." This was, at least, good Samoan parenting as her mother saw it. Most characteristic of Margaret Mead was neither her excessive distance nor intimacy, but rather her tendency to blur the line between them. She could seem clinical in recording Mary Catherine's birth and her early development, yet her scientific observations of exotic peoples could be colored by her own passions, theoretical and personal. So commanding a thinker could sometimes "overstand" her subjects, and she was not above bullying her "native" subjects into providing information for her.

Her literary virtues sometimes inspired misgivings among her colleagues. The vividness of her cultural portraits, her dramatic contrasts between cultures she happened to study, and the too-perfect set of variations in sex roles she found in three New Guinea societies made Mead's critics question her objectivity. Yet Margaret Mead was no simple romantic. The lucidity of her mind, and her extraordinary perceptiveness are repeatedly attested to by friends and colleagues. She was, furthermore, a meticulous fieldworker.

Howard's fascination with Margaret Mead turns on Mead's numerous contradictions. She could be ludicrously glib one moment, then incisive and penetrating the next. She was both a celebrated iconoclast and an ardent traditionalist who was religious to the end of her life. Mead became associated with the doctrine of cultural relativism, yet stressed equally the importance of innate temperamental differences among individuals that sometimes resisted cultural conditioning. She was too American to be comfortable with simple cultural determinism.

Of all Mead's contradictions none is so intriguing or appealing as her ultimate dependency in a world in which she seemed naturally to take charge. She appeared to choreograph the lives of everyone she knew, while all the while nurturing an elaborate set of dependencies on others. Her friend Colin Frank likened the job of getting Mead where she was supposed to go to "wheeling a giant brain around." Her mind, it seems, was always several steps ahead of her body.

Perhaps most perplexing is the gap between Mead's popular and professional reputations. Outside her own field she was often viewed as an oracle. Yet her legacy within anthropology is more equivocal. She published best sellers but has left behind no unquestionable masterpiece in academic anthropology. Mead explored so many places and themes in anthropology, yet it is difficult to specify a single seminal idea associated with her. She helped pioneer the use of film in anthropology. She was in the forefront of the cross-cultural study of women and adolescents. Yet these are innovations in methodology rather than substantive ideas. Gregory Bateson put it best: "Margaret Mead was hard if not impossible to pigeonhole. In years to come . . . people would recognize that her contributions had been enormous, without being able to say quite why."

Howard's triumph is to have made quite clear the sources of Margaret Mead's greatness. Partly it was the quick subtlety of Mead's perceptions of those around her, a quality that is evident in a thousand details of observation, but in no general theory. Her stature is also connected with her courage in bridging conventional gaps in our comprehension of human activities. She stood between the academy and the world of practical wisdom; she bridged anthropology and psychology; she linked the concerns of men and women by making women's issues matter in anthropology. Her bisexuality, obliquely revealed in Howard's narrative, is in fact an extension of Mead's characteristic "betwixt and between" status, and is not the revelation it might have been.

Mostly, I suspect, Mead's stature comes from the combination of energy and optimism that made her special to those around her. She had a way of energizing others and conveying her heady self-confidence in the powers of reason and passion in the service of humanity." ". . . Margaret, you must understand, never did unimportant things," commented Luther Cressman (her first husband), with a touch of bitter irony. Yet that was it: she had the rare capacity to make things matter. For this alone her friends were willing to forgive much in Mead that was not appealing.

Jane Howard has not quite gotten inside the skin of Margaret Mead, for which Mead herself would be grateful. Yet she has skillfully recreated the dazzling and frenetic world that surrounded Mead, giving us more of Mead than we had before, and perhaps as much as we shall ever have.

# A psaltery of one liners

**GOD KNOWS**

**Joseph Heller**
**Knopf, $16.95, 354 pp.**

**Joel Wells**

TO EXEGETE John L. McKenzie the biblical David was a bloodthirsty bandit, a sort of Old Testament Robin Hood with little or no redeeming social value. To Joseph Heller, who makes him the raunchy protagonist of his fourth novel, he is the first stand-up Jewish comedian, a forerunner of Mel Brooks, Lennie Bruce, and Woody Allen, and God is his straight man.

Actually, Heller has made him a lie-down comedian because the whole book is a flashback monologue delivered by a garrulous David from his deathbed. He lies there shivering and impotent, ministered to by a nubile virgin and visited periodically by a now middle-aged Bathsheba who hectors him to leapfrog their son Solomon to the top of the list of successors to the throne. But Solomon is a hopeless klutz who cribs all of David's best lines on a clay tablet so he



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will get credit for them in the Bible. ("I'll let you in on a secret about my son Solomon: he was dead serious when he proposed cutting the baby in half, that *putz*. I swear to God. The dumb son of a bitch was trying to be fair, not shrewd.")

David is waiting for an apology from God for letting the son which Bathsheba bore him as a result of their illicit coupling die; God, for his part has never forgiven David for sending Bathsheba's husband off to the front to be killed. David finds this niggardly of God since it was a mere peccadillo on his slate: "Gory deeds? I've got more than enough for every taste. I have suicide, regicide, patricide, homicide, fratricide, infanticide, adultery, incest, hanging, and more decapitations than just Saul's." David finds God inexplicable in any case, and not terribly bright. To his knowledge God has only managed to outsmart him on one occasion and probably resents David's brains and the fact that he refused to play by the book or pay much attention to what God tries to tell him through his muddled prophet Nathan. "Did I kill Uriah to avoid a scandal," he wonders, "or because I already had settled in my soul that I wanted his wife? God knows. For not only is the heart deceitful in all things, it is also desperately wicked. Even mine. The danger in being a king is that after a while you begin to believe you really are one."

Heller has done his homework in Samuel and Kings and the story holds close to Scripture in chronology and detail. But the seriousness largely ends there, with no real attempt to get inside the heads of any characters other than David, or to get down the ethos of the period as Thomas Mann managed so splendidly in *Joseph in Egypt*, or to dazzle with arcane imagination as Mailer did less successfully in *Ancient Evenings*. What we get instead are one-liners ("A harem is a warm climate, not an easy thing to keep in mint condition"), outrageous anachronisms (Bathsheba designed bloomers, the caftan and the mini-skirt; David has a weakness for tacos). After listening to the honeymoon prescriptions laid on him by David's first wife, King Saul's daughter princess Michal ("I will want you to bathe every night and to brush your teeth after every meal. Always use deodorants. You must wash your hands with strong soap after defecating and urinating, especially before you start preparing my food. Always make sure that your hair is combed, especially in the back. . . . Don't pick your nose in front of me. That's gross."), we hardly need to be told, as Heller does tell us, that David has married the original J.A.P. To enliven the mandatory plodding through dead patches of scriptural narrative we are given David's comments and complaints about everything from plagiarism (it wasn't just Solomon who stole from him, but Shakespeare and Milton, among others) to Michelangelo's outrageous portrayal of him as uncircumcised. He bitterly resents the fact that not a single book in the Bible is named for him whereas Samuel "that crude, blundering jackass" has two. He protests far too often that the lines about his love for Jonathan surpassing that of man for woman will be misconstrued ("I am David the king, not Oscar Wilde") and boasts about his sexual prowess ("Oh, boy, did I cleave to her!).

Now all this may sound fairly diverting in the telling and it's admittedly churlish for a reviewer to rip off some of a book's better gags and then put it down, but the formula gets more than tedious at book length. Far too early on in *God Knows* the temptation to start skimming all the biblical prose for the jokes and naughty bits becomes overpowering. Heller does a brisk and diverting job with the slaying of Goliath, but keeps coming back to other key incidents like a pesky, droning fly. The voyeuristic roof-top bathing seduction scene is re-created with variations at least four times, and the sole suspense provided is whether Bathsheba, the only woman David feels sure can stir him from impotence, will agree to lie with him one last time if he will agree to name Solomon king. In the end it's like inviting the Two-Thousand-Year-Old-Man to prove that he has total recall or like accidentally sitting down beside the Ancient Mariner on a long bus trip.

*Catch-22* is a hard act to follow and even it may have been too protracted. Perhaps Heller is aware that he runs on a bit. As he has Bathsheba tell David when he boasts about his psalms: "Some are masterpieces but, like everything you write, they're flawed by excessive length."

# The Seven Mountains of Thomas Merton

*(Continued from page 560)*

publisher the love poetry occasioned by this relationship)?

Not all Merton's enthusiasms bore fruit in a book or an article. The fact that so many did is amazing when one realizes his rigorous commitment to prayer and solitude. And even this commitment has its ambiguity. He sought solitude relentlessly, yet he needed to be with people. Moreover, by the sixties a new and demanding dimension was added to his monastic life that further complicated his desire for solitude. He began to reach far beyond the monastic walls, writing articles and letters on racial justice, Vietnam, and nuclear war (his statements on the last find significant parallels in the 1983 American bishops' Pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace*). When he was forbidden to write on war and peace, he went underground with mimeographed articles. Yet his involvement in the social issues of his day never shook his conviction that he was irrevocably a monk.

This man of many talents and lofty ambitions was not a contradiction, but surely a paradox—and more than that, a mystery, not only to others but often to himself, as he strove to integrate his enormous spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and emotional capabilities into a unified life. Michael Mott has managed to put together a remarkable, coherent, and eminently readable portrait of the different Mertons that emerge from the published writings, the journals, the life-events, and the many friendships of Gethsemani's most famous monk. Surely no small feat. One does not have to agree with everything that Mott has said, but nonetheless from now on anyone who writes about Merton must



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reckon with this biography, and anyone who ignores it runs the risk of moving Merton scholarship in wrong or unproductive directions.

Mott has followed an appropriate hermeneutic. As far as possible he allows Merton to interpret himself. This means of course that there is a generous use of the journals (since it is especially in the journals that Merton analyzes self and motives). Yet Mott is careful not to let his text become entangled in a catena of quotations. The book is clearly Mott's, not Merton's: the author remains in control. More than that, Merton's judgments of himself are not sacrosanct: Mott does not hesitate to question them when it seems necessary. For if Merton was his own best and most frequent critic, he was at the same time his own severest judge. There are times when his self-criticism needs softening. This is perhaps especially true in the book that brought him instant fame: *The Seven Storey Mountain*. Mott writes, "Merton was not always fair to his younger self. Trying to be fairer, at times I have been critical of *The Seven Storey Mountain*. The older Merton and the younger Merton showed a gaiety and high spirits which were largely suppressed during the early years in the monastery, and I have tried to bring back the balance occasionally by including the laughter of a deeply serious man."

*The Seven Storey Mountain*—Merton's bestseller autobiography which covers more than half his life—probably poses as serious a challenge as any to a Merton biographer. It is no easy thing to retell a best-seller. Mott manages this well. Again, he does not succumb to the temptation of letting biography become autobiography. It is his story about Merton rather than Merton's story about himself that we read, fleshing in details that were omitted in *Seven Storey Mountain* and clearing up many of the mysteries that Trappist propriety left obscure or unresolved.

Merton was one of those persons whom people instinctively like. He was very human, unaffectedly and endearingly so. The subtleties of that humanness have been captured by Mott in both its strengths and its frailties. Readers will especially want to see how Mott handles two crucial and complicated situations in Merton's life: his brief love affair with a young woman in 1966 and his long-time relationship as a monk to his abbot, Dom James Fox. No review can do justice to Mott's careful and sensitive portrayal of both these incidents. Both are put in a context that make his presentation balanced and insightful. For many readers Mott's handling of these relationships — confusing and complex though they be, yet important for understanding Merton — may well be highlights of clarity and clarification in a book that reads well from beginning to end.

The title of the biography—intended to stress the importance of place to Merton and its influence on him—seems to me a bit artificial and contrived. One could probably think of an eighth or ninth mountain. Further, the title gives no indication that the book is a biography and indeed the unwary browser in a bookstore might mistake it for a novel or a new edition of *Seven Storey Mountain*.

Minor points: The most admired of Merton's books on contemplation is, I feel sure, not *Seeds of Contemplation* (p.238), but *New Seeds*. Fr. Irenaeus's name does mean "peaceful," but in Greek not Latin (p.129). To the impressive list of Merton names and nicknames, (p.7) I would like to add the delightful Chinese name given him by Dr. John Wu: *Mei Teng* which means *Silent Lamp*.

*Follow the Ecstasy* purports to be a "dialogue" between Merton and the late John Howard Griffin, the first appointed Merton biographer who was forced because of ill health to give up the project. It is also, so the preface says, "the hermit's life-story and Griffin's lucid synthesis of solitude." As one who knew and admired John H. Griffin in life and would not want to dishonor him in death, I regret that the decision was made to publish what I can only judge to be an early rough draft—perhaps from tapes of his reading of the Merton journals. If this is a false judgment and this text was actually intended as finished copy, one can only conclude that Merton fared better in a book by Michael Mott who never knew him than he would have fared at the hands of a very dear friend.

# Catholic psyche then & tomorrow

**THE NOW AND FUTURE CHURCH**
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BEING AN AMERICAN CATHOLIC
**Eugene Kennedy**
**Doubleday, $13.95, 198 pp.**

**HOW TO SAVE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**
**Andrew M. Greeley and Mary Greeley Durkin**
**Viking, $16.95, 256 pp.**

**Robert Imbelli**

IN the most intriguing chapter of *The Now and Future Church*, Eugene Kennedy recounts, with the relish and poignancy of a good Irish storyteller, a too-little-known tale of the American church. The *New York Review*, published at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, shone for a thousand bright days in the first decade of the twentieth century, seeking to reconcile "ancient faith and modern knowledge," only to fall victim to the anti-modernist paranoia propagated by the religiously sensitive but intellectually shallow Pope Pius X. The suppression of the *Review* and the extinguishing at Dunwoodie of the novel experiment in seminary education which it spearheaded serve Kennedy as potent symbol for the anti-intellectualism and clerical authoritarianism which formed the shadow side of the prodigiously immigrant church in America.

Kennedy is moved to exclaim rhetorically: "What might have happened had the light struck at Dunwoodie not been so abruptly snuffed out?" Of course, one can only speculate. Yet it might be conjectured, with some plausibility, that the American church would have been far better prepared for Vatican II and would have endured the ensuing crisis of growth with far less trauma.

The other chapters of the book, ranging from interviews with Joseph

*(Continued on page 565)*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# MORTE D'AUTHOR

JAMES HARKNESS

SHORTLY AFTER publication date, I noticed uneasily how often I'd begun to speak of "my current book."

Uneasily because, strictly speaking, it both was and wasn't mine. Like all translations, this one was a chimerical beast, shy to confront the labyrinth of its lineage. I assured myself that I was the source of every actual word: the English rendering of the French text, the punctilious introduction, the extensive notes. In addition, it was I who had undergone the excruciating tedium of acquiring various rights, including those to illustrations not included in the foreign edition. I'd checked facts, referenced and cross-referenced, corrected errors, composed an index.

On such grounds I suppressed the guilt of the possessive — and on the somewhat less theoretical ones that "my book" was just convenient verbal shorthand for "my translation of the book by . . ." Honest labor deserves a marginal claim to authority, if not authorship.

Oedipal? How Oedipal, as they say, was it? Thanks to Mr. Bloom we're now accustomed to thinking of poetics as parricide, while scholars who've examined Mozart, Flaubert, and Kafka appear well on the way to a new aesthetic of creativity as lineal *ressentiment*: rebellion, hopelessness, frustration by what Michel Foucault once called *le Non du père*.

Translation is a perfect example of such intergenerational and interlingual violence, an extended tantrum sparked by "the father's No." It is precisely not, after all, what most people assume, a sequence of more or less exact replacements — words for equivalent words, ideas for corresponding ideas, like putting Firestone tires on a car that came with Goodyear. Less obviously than signs but more fundamentally, concepts themselves differ from language to language. The critic Jonathan Culler offers a simple illustration: in English a river contrasts with a stream on the basis of size, while in France *fleuves* flow to the sea while *rivières* don't.

The more complex the topic, the more likely, not to say perilous, the divergence. The fact is that you can communicate things in French (or German, Japanese, or Aramaic) that you just can't get across in English, and vice versa — varieties of experience unique to the particular culture. Hence translation's scandal of meaning: at the limit, it doesn't so much serve as a conduit between tongues for shared thoughts; it wrests from one language something it cannot quite say, or else interjects into another something it cannot quite hear.

Most translators are younger than the authors they re-present — in many cases, by millennia. Predictably, they are heir to all the indignities commonly heaped upon the offspring of domineering parents. Publishers treat them vaguely as intermediaries, not infrequently neglecting to add their names to dust jackets and title pages. Reviewers generally ignore them, or, if linguists themselves, take trivial exception to idiomatic interpretations. The most hermetic arguments in the world rage over questions of vocabulary and phrasing that matter not a whit, while Herculean feats of intelligibility go unnoted, as if floating weightlessly above the bed of an utterly limpid stream of consciousness. Along with eternally recurrent re-translations of classic works, these squabblings have about them the aspect of a kind of sibling rivalry, jealous scions bumping heads over the patrimony of the text.

"Liberal or literal" — the translator's freedom is always posed in terms of fidelity. Does a translator do a better job, that is, a more faithfully subservient one, by following close on the author's heels? Or by keeping a considered though unfailingly respectful distance? Preserve style at the sacrifice of clarity? The contours of idiom at the expense of content? The author's own obscurities, or what (the translator thinks) the author meant to say? What the translator believes the author *should* have said, or what the translator presumes to say on his behalf? Like the ideal son, the ideal translator is a genealogical paradox: so passive he conforms to the parent's fondest wishes, so active he redeems the parent's gravest flaws.

To whom, then, does a translation "belong"? If the child is sometimes father to the man, whose claim of paternity comes first? Throughout Donald Barthelme's *The Dead Father*, dutiful progeny drag across an interminable landscape the corpse of some enormous Dad, a Gulliver-like colossus to their Lilliputian swarm. Moribund or not, the vast father's condition in no way hampers him from carrying on the most vigorous discourse with his conveyors — commenting on the scenery, reminiscing about his former life, suggesting ways around obstacles, minutely directing every moment and movement. A more irritating, more brutally loquacious back-seat driver is impossible to imagine. Yet only the children's initiative prevents the chattering cadaver from becoming what it already is, from settling down heavily, inertly amid the silent dust of the grave. Only their energetic struggle postpones the fatal moment of rest, permitting the dead father to continue journeying on toward the blank horizon. Toward what end? Resurrection and rebirth, perhaps? Or the true death of obliteration, the inheritors' long awaited emancipation? *Le Non du père*? Or the ambiguous affirmation of a prodigal son?

JAMES HARKNESS *is a writer who lives in upstate New York. He is the translator of Michel Foucault's* This Is Not a Pipe *(University of California Press.)*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 563)

Campbell and Karl Rahner to profiles of Paul VI and John Paul II, are presented with some verve and betray an evident concern for the church and its future. They even sound an upbeat note, as when Kennedy lauds the greatness of the frequently maligned Paul VI and celebrates the commonsense collegiality of the American bishops. Yet, though the style is easy and the anecdotes captivating, one cannot escape the impression that Sunday-supplement features have been strung together to form a book. Much repetition, little novel insight, slight penetration of the issues render the book redundant of countless other attempts to examine the great beast called Catholicism in crisis. The subtitle somewhat pretentiously proclaims the book's intention to explore "the psychology of being an American Catholic"; but, alas, it is a pop psychology which we encounter here. Perhaps the book itself illustrates the thesis that, in truth, the American Catholic community and its scholarship have not yet recovered from the debacle at Dunwoodie seventy-five years ago.

Greeley and Durkin promise more. Their aim is to identify, amid the swirling confusions of right and left, the essence of Catholicism, that distinctive Catholic sensibility which is the matrix of doctrines and the mainstay of a specifically religious ethics. This sensibility, according to the authors, comprises four interrelated components: sacramental experience, analogical imagination, comic (that is, ultimately optimistic) story, and an organic sense of community. Thus the authors hope to recover the poetic depths of the Catholic experience which have been too long repressed by doctrinal desiccation and clerical literal-mindedness.

In the practical policies which flow from this resurrected sensibility, Greeley and Durkin stress the sacramentality of sexuality, the appreciation of woman as analog of God, and the role of a collegial, non-authoritarian leadership, firmly rooted in the local parish community. In this their own proposals concur with those of Kennedy. Indeed, both books breathe the same bracing air of the Chicago Irish-Catholic subculture, with its loves and hates, its feuds and loyalties, its nostalgia and aspiration. Greeley and Durkin evoke with unembarrassed affection growing up Catholic in St. Angela's parish with its awe-inspiring Mass, its Marian sensitivity, and its full range of social activities. And they lament (only too frequently) the post-Vatican II disposal of "the baby with the bath water."

Lurking in my own New York ethnic background lies an image of grandfather's table where, to the eye of a child, a seemingly huge jug of wine sat awesomely in one corner. The wine's label bore the enigmatic emblem "*G&D*". In reading G&D's *How To Save the Catholic Church*, my analogical imagination conjured up that long-ago jug which I now know to be produced from undistinguished grapes and bottled only after a


# New & Notable ...FALL '84

**Weeds Among the Wheat**
Discernment: Where Prayer and Action Meet
**Thomas H. Green, S.J.**
An invaluable tool for all who are called to discern in concrete terms what God's will is for their lives. By the author of the bestselling trilogy on prayer: *Opening to God, When the Well Runs Dry,* and *Darkness in the Marketplace.*
208 pages, **$4.95**

**Miryam of Nazareth**
Woman of Strength & Wisdom
**Ann Johnson**
Woman of prayer, woman of faith, woman of confidence, this is the Mary of Nazareth we meet in this vivid, contemporary portrait of the mother of Jesus.
128 pages, **$4.95**

**Praying the Daily Gospels**
A Guide to Meditation
**Philip A. St. Romain**
A unique combination of explanatory notes and suggested reflections to help the reader internalize the meaning of the gospels and apply their message to daily life.
248 pages, **$5.95**

**The Journey to Inner Peace**
Preface by Barbara Shlemon
**Rev. Paul A. Feider**
A step-by-step guide to an understanding of inner peace, its importance as a gift from God, and as a means for discovering the real meaning of life. Explains the primary healing themes of reconciliation, listening to the Lord, courage, and inner healing.
112 pages, **$3.95**

**From your local bookstore, or:**

**AVE MARIA PRESS**
**Notre Dame, Indiana 46556**




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

second or third pressing. Like the wine, the book offers some initial sparkle and fleeting moments of interest. However, it soon sours with its vapid phrases and dyspeptic polemics, its outrageous generalizations and egregious self-congratulations. For a work which extols artistic creativity and life-giving sacramentality, long stretches are numbingly anaesthetic. Greeley, frère et soeur, dedicate their joint venture to "Jack Durkin who has to put up with both of us." Mr. Durkin, I fear, no longer walks alone.

I found it impossible, in reading these explorations into Catholic identity, not to advert to the recent discussion in *Commonweal* — "The End of Catholicism?" — provoked by the essays of Thomas Sheehan. Both books obviously proceed from a genuine concern, even passion, for the Catholic enterprise. Neither would endorse or support Sheehan's pragmatic reductionism. Yet both, to some degree, leave themselves open to Sheehan's devastating charge of "ecumenical Rotarianism." In neither work does the Christological foundation of both the Catholic sensibility and the church which is its carrier receive more than perfunctory attention. Kennedy mouths some vague reference to "the gospel," but devotes much more space to Joseph Campbell than to Jesus Christ. Greeley and Durkin certainly speak of Christ as "sacrament"; yet the paradigm story which appears to give content to the sacramentality is not that of cross/resurrection, but that of Christmas. Indeed, the former is associated with the Protestant sensibility, while the latter recommends itself as quintessentially Catholic.

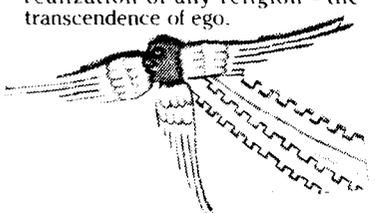
What I miss in either work is some acute sense of the costliness of grace and its frequently countercultural implications. In the stories the books tell, the canonization of experience risks coming too early and too easily. Kennedy honors Karl Rahner as "theologian for the now and future church" and Greeley credits him with articulating the Catholic instinct that grace is everywhere. But, as so often before, the differentiated conclusions of the master threaten to become the innocuous starting points of the disciples. Whatever the validity of Greeley and Durkin's contrast of Catholic and Protestant sensibilities (and I find them rather facile and overdrawn), it is not Christmas but cross/resurrection which structures the identity-defining narrative of Christian faith. Only if this foundation is sure, can we hope to move beyond ecumenical Rotarianism to ecumenical Christianity.

The bottom line for any reader and writer of reviews is unabashedly pecuniary: to buy or not to buy. In both instances I recommend the latter. But if the topic intrigues and the cash is at hand, then consider Rosemary Haughton's splendidly sacramental work, *The Catholic Thing*. It manifests the theological depth which Kennedy lacks and the creative imagination which G&D only talk about.


**"One of the most significant spiritual books of our day."**

– FATHER THOMAS KEATING, former abbot of St. Joseph's Abbey in Massachusetts

Written by former nun Bernadette Roberts, this book tells the wonderfully moving story of how the author reached one of the highest states of realization of any religion – the transcendence of ego.



**THE EXPERIENCE OF NO-SELF**

A Contemplative Journey

**by BERNADETTE ROBERTS**

Paperbound $8.95, now at your bookstore, or order from Shambhala Publications, Box 271, Boulder, CO 80306. (Add $1.75 for handling.)

**SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIONS**

distributed by Random House


# From El Dorado to apocalypse

**THE WAR OF THE END OF THE WORLD**

**Mario Vargas Llosa**

**Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $18.95**

**568 pp.**

**Ronald Christ**

TYPICALLY, Mario Vargas Llosa discovers his fiction in some nugget of real-life experience, sometimes reported in an impersonal source like a newspaper, and then develops his find by refracting it through multiple points of view to construct a civic drama where psychological events figure socially, politically. (He reads about a schoolboy castrated by a guard dog, for example, and invents *The Cubs*, where that solo catastrophe becomes a chorus of antiphonal, adolescent voices expressing a class, an era.) Consequently, the Peruvian author replaces the continuity of introspective character with colliding narrative fragments that clash to isolate and collect figures within a cinematic montage the complexity and scope of which define the ambition of his work. And Vargas Llosa is a very ambitious writer.

Previously he had aimed highest with *Conversation in the Cathedral*, while his last two novels, *Capt. Pantoja and the Special Service* and *Aunt Julia and the Script Writer*, hunkered closer to comedy and games with narrative techniques — almost as if he were holding back a bit, toning up for a really big encounter, and incidentally winning a wider, newer audience with a lighthearted look at himself and some of his past seriousness. The title of his most recent novel, however, heralds his renewed aspiration, while the novel's launching in Spain with a deluxe,

> *They may well believe nonsensical things, ingenuous, stupid things. But that doesn't matter. What matters is what they do. They have done away with property, marriage, social hierarchies; they have refused to accept the authority of the Church and State, and wiped out an army company. They have fought against authority, money, uniforms, cassocks.*
>
> — Mario Vargas Llosa
> *The War of the End of the World*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

boxed edition and elaborate promotion trumpeted a victory almost before the gauntlet was flung. Predictably, success followed. Now the conquering display of his beaming face and copies of the book in New York stores as well as a radiant front-page review in the *Times* seem to celebrate that victory. Nevertheless, this *War*, while offering some exciting skirmishes, is more shadow-boxing than battle, better suited to subway riders needing a long but interruptible read than to admiring fans who still see Vargas Llosa as a laureate lacking only a Nobel crown.

Perhaps the grand subject came too ready-made: the true story of the Counselor, a backland religious leader, who, at the turn of the century in Brazil, established an errant Christian community that challenged the emerging secular republic as the antichrist and nearly succeeded in toppling not only the civil government but also a military establishment unaccustomed to fighting unprofessional wars. Such a conflict of absolutely certain beliefs almost demanded the author's well-known technique: social analysis through clashing views — of the leader and his followers from inside the settlement, from outside by soldiers, politicians, and priests, and from midpoint by natives being won over to the communistic community. But the technique has gone slack, partly because the expansive quality and divided stories inherent in the subject do not require Vargas Llosa's analytic expansion and exploitation, mostly because Vargas Llosa does not edit the sequences so much as merely shuffle them. Few sparks glint when he slams one chunk of the big story into another.

Two principal characters, among the proverbial cast of thousands, contribute to the book's massive hollowness: a journalist who serves as one of Vargas Llosa's surrogate authors, and the Counselor himself. This journalist, nearsighted by Homeric epithet on *every* appearance, breaks his glasses and cannot see anything during the destruction of the religious community. Vargas Llosa obviously intends our necessarily myopic view of historic events, but this man's redundant whining and blinking dwindle to a Dickensian mechanism never properly wound up, losing our interest before earning any. Like the author's insistent little litanies of enumeration and descriptive detail throughout the text, the journalist means more to the author than he ever can to us.

More significant is the void at the center. We hear about the Counselor, about his ability to convert children, legendary criminals, and pathetic misfits into Christian paradigms (with names like The Little Blessed One); but the author cannot get him to say much more than things like "Death is a fiesta for the just man," which sums up his quirky emphasis on proper burial but sounds more like a sophomore's reading of Octavio Paz's *Labyrinth of Solitude*. Worse still, Vargas Llosa withdraws the shadowy Counselor into his citadel rather early on, so we see less of, hear almost nothing directly from him. Imagine the Gospels, hyperbolically expanded but with chiefly indirect reports of Jesus, gathered from a sociological cross-section of puzzled Romans, repentant sinners, and ignorant converts, and you'll get something of the picture. (For once you may be better off waiting for the picture.)

Yet, despite an elephantine slackness, *The War of the End of the World* brands our imagination, first with its many small scenes of physical violence — including a rape we should hope to forget — and, second, with its vision of this anomalous war as the beginning of South America's twentieth-century world, the world we watch, through the clouded lenses of our media, being fought over these days. No one aware of the entanglement of church, government, and army in South America can read these pages only as novel, as historical freak. This is a Latin American apocalypse now, and you will shudder in recognition (before sighing with tedium). Vargas Llosa's subject does become ours, especially in the spirited translation of Helen Lane, whose lively diction and syntactical revision focus the original for us. *The War*'s profound, curious pertinence, which may have overwhelmed the author, will reward you. But never before has Vargas Llosa said less with so much more.

# Recurring battle scars

**MACHINE DREAMS**

**Jayne Anne Phillips**
**Dutton. $16.95, 327 pp.**

**Robert Phillips**

TO SAY Jayne Anne Phillips's first book, the story collection *Black Tickets*, was highly praised would be understatement. The jacket was larded with nine blurbs (Raymond Carver, Tillie Olsen, Rosellen Brown, et. al.), and reviewers outdid themselves in marking this debut by a young writer.

The book was praiseworthy, though not the kind of first book which demonstrates a fully developed talent or a unique vision (the way, say, Eudora Welty's first collection, *A Curtain of Green*, could have been written by no one else). *Black Tickets* was a mixed bag. Half the stories were linear family chronicles, like "Home" — which began with the marvelous first sentence, " 'I'm afraid Walter Cronkite has had it,' says Mom." Others were brief, stark heart-stabs — grotesque tales in the manner of Erskine Caldwell or Flannery O'Connor: protagonists included a fifteen-year-old-child-molester, an incestuous brother and sister, and a woman who has orgasms only when she makes love to herself. Some of these pieces were as brief as a single paragraph.

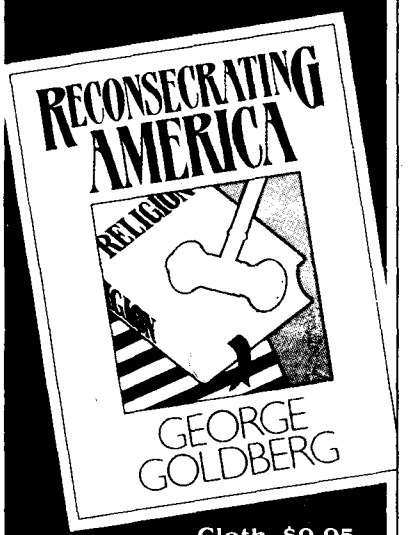
When it was announced that Ms. Phillips had delivered a novel, one wondered which direction it would take — familial personal history, or the more flashy Southern Gothic? Fortunately she chose the former, and *Machine Dreams* is whole-cloth — an accomplished novel which is ambitious and original.

The "machine dreams" of the title ostensibly are nightmares which Mitch Hampson has after serving in the second world war. He dreams of bulldozing decaying corpses of the enemy, which he in fact had to do. But machines play important roles throughout the novel — new and used automobiles, old dump trucks,



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"A SPLENDID AND FASCINATING BOOK,
*a model of a clear, closely reasoned, lucid, and persuasive analysis of how an activist Supreme Court has perverted the meaning of the First Amendment provisions about religion."*
– MILTON FRIEDMAN




Cloth, $9.95

"A shrewd and useful book."
– C. MICHAEL CURTIS
Senior Editor, *The Atlantic*

"Well written and informative. . . . The book aptly illustrates the conflict between the 'establishment' and 'free exercise' clauses, the inconsistencies in the current law and how they developed through case law over the years, and it provides the reader with a rational and reasonable approach for the future."
–THEODORE M. HESBURGH
President, University of Notre Dame

At your bookstore, or write:
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
GRAND RAPIDS MICH 49501

cement mixers, airplanes, and helicopters. Even the Mobile flying red horse is a symbol of power, escape — as much a part of the American dream as the belief that everyone should own a home and car. The novel is "about" the American dream and how two wars destroyed it.

The first is World War II. Mitch returns from it a changed man, and even engaging in marriage and his own business cannot help him "find himself." He becomes preoccupied with building an air raid shelter, an activity for which his wife Jean has no sympathy. He is also in the Vietnam War, in which Jean's son Billy takes part after rejecting his sister's plans for his escape to Canada. War is something Billy accepts, stoically and inevitably.

Both men write letters home from their wars, and these correspondences are some of the novel's best writing. Ms. Phillips describes basic training and combat as if she'd been there. The novel's other sections shift points of view between family members. Jean reminisces to her daughter Danner; Danner reminisces about her brother Billy; Billy broods on his childhood . . . From Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* to Shirley Ann Grau's *The Condor Passes*, it is a time-honored format for the family chronicle. With a few exceptions, Ms. Phillips handles her material skillfully. Mitch, in the second section, is insufficiently established and delineated. Danner, in the sixteenth section, rehearses events we've already witnessed in a repetitive and unnecessary way. One wishes to know more about Bess and Warwick.

While one has difficulty caring much about Mitch and Jean, there is no questioning the power of the second half. The special bond of affection between Billy and Danner is the novel's most convincing and touching theme. When Billy is lost in action, the impact upon Danner is predictable but moving. She begins to think of the past only in terms of what Billy saw and knew. She begins to have dreams of Billy as he was as a young kid, before he got caught up in the machinations of men and war.

Not a perfect novel, then, but an affecting one, *Machine Dreams* is written in poetic, lyrical language — full of pastoral and precise images. One reads it knowing it is a work carefully built, sentence for sentence, page for page. With her second book Jayne Anne Phillips has earned the acclaim critics were so eager to give her the first time around.

# The many-splendored genius

**THE MEMORY PALACE OF MATTEO RICCI**

**Jonathan D. Spence**
**Viking, $19.95, 302 pp.**

**John W. O'Malley**

LAST YEAR marked the four-hundredth anniversary of Matteo Ricci's entrance into China, and the event was celebrated by a number of conferences and lectures dealing with that remarkable Jesuit missionary. Jonathan Spence, chairman of the history department at Yale University and an expert on China, now offers us this full-scale study of Ricci's life. The book is authoritative and learned, but written with grace in a style to appeal to a general audience. It tells a fascinating story.

Spence does not follow the narrative techniques of standard biography. He structures the book, instead, around two sets of images. The first of these consists of four ideographs that Ricci used in his book on the art of memory composed for the Chinese. The second is four engravings of scenes from the Bible that Ricci introduced into China. The technique is ingenious, and in itself betrays much about the cultural worlds in which Ricci moved. It can, however, be a little distracting at first unless you are forewarned that this book is indeed biography, not a specialized study of "the memory palace."

Like any good biography, what is especially rewarding in the book is Spence's mastery of detail. We follow Ricci from his boyhood in the little Italian town of Macerata to his studies as a Jesuit in Rome, and thence to his over-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*The emperor Wanli apparently roared with laughter when told that European rulers sometimes lived on the upper floors of their high buildings, so absurd did such an idea seem to him. This prompted in Ricci the reflection that 'thus are all people kept content to remain in the modes in which they were brought up.' Yet ultimately this enigmatic figure of Wanli, so apparently autocratic at one level, so hedged in with restrictions at another, had a powerful effect on Ricci.*

— Jonathan D. Spence

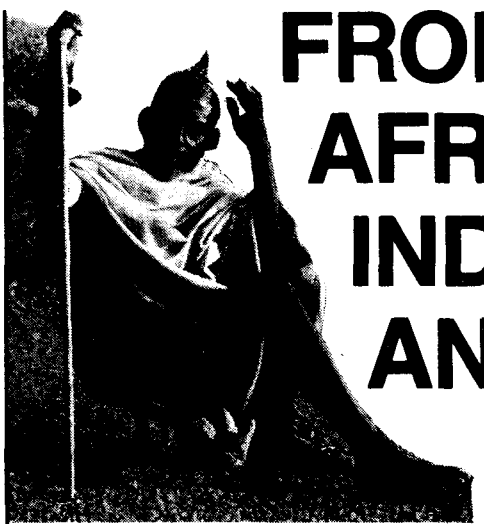
*The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*

seas ventures. Fortunately, many of Ricci's letters and other writings survive, so that we have ample and accurate information about how he and his colleagues lived and how they thought about themselves and their work. Their daring and their courageous efforts to adapt to Chinese ways appear all the more remarkable the more we see the difficulties they faced.

Spence is sympathetic to his subject, but by no means uncritical. This is not standard hagiography by any means. Spence knows Ricci well, but he also knows China. He is thus able to point out mistakes Ricci made and to unmask certain delusions, like Ricci's hope to become court confessor to the emperor in imitation of some of his Jesuit brethren in Europe.

But these limitations pale when placed alongside Ricci's many-sided genius. He was a *uomo universale* that Italy produced so easily and in such great numbers during the Renaissance. His memory was prodigious. He casually wrote in 1595 that he could run through a random list of four or five hundred Chinese ideographs and then be able to repeat the list frontwards or backwards. He published a Chinese translation of the first six books of Euclid, and he constructed an accurate world-map with all the place names transcribed into Chinese. He set up and supervised a printing press in the Jesuit residence. He composed songs in Chinese that could be sung with the accompaniment of the harpsichord that he had given to the emperor. In writing about religion for the Chinese, he had recourse to ideas from philosophers like Epictetus and Plato.

Some of the Chinese were hostile and suspicious, and the missionaries were often in danger, often misunderstood. But many Chinese were charmed by them, and Ricci eventually had a number of powerful and wealthy friends. As time went on, he found himself invited to long banquets at the homes of his Chinese friends, sometimes as many as three or more a day. He looked upon these as occasions to speak about the goodness of God in an atmosphere congenial to the Chinese, but we are also informed that he "ate and drank exuberantly" at them. He and his colleagues were carried to such banquets on sedan-chairs paid for by the host, and they sometimes enjoyed similarly "first-class" accommodations on their long journeys. One wonders how officials of the Jesuit order in Rome would have reacted to such conduct had communications allowed them to super-

FROM AFRICA, INDIA, AND ASIA

NEW THIRD WORLD THEOLOGY

**TELL US OUR NAMES**
**Story Theology from an Asian Perspective**
by C.S. SONG
"To those who believe that theology has to do only with ideas and concepts, this volume may come as a joyful discovery."
—S.J. SAMARTHA, World Council of Churches, Geneva
"A monumental accomplishment."—NAM-DONG SUH, Institute for Mission-Education, Seoul
224 pp. $10.95 pbk

**CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT FETISHES**
**An African Critique and Recapture of Christianity**
by F. EBOUSSI BOULAGA
"Once the depth of Eboussi's critique begins to sink in, one realizes that inculturation has to do with very basic worldviews, with basic human values, and indeed with the sharing of power."—SIMON E. SMITH, SJ, Jesuit Refugee Service, Nairobi
256 pp. $11.95 pbk

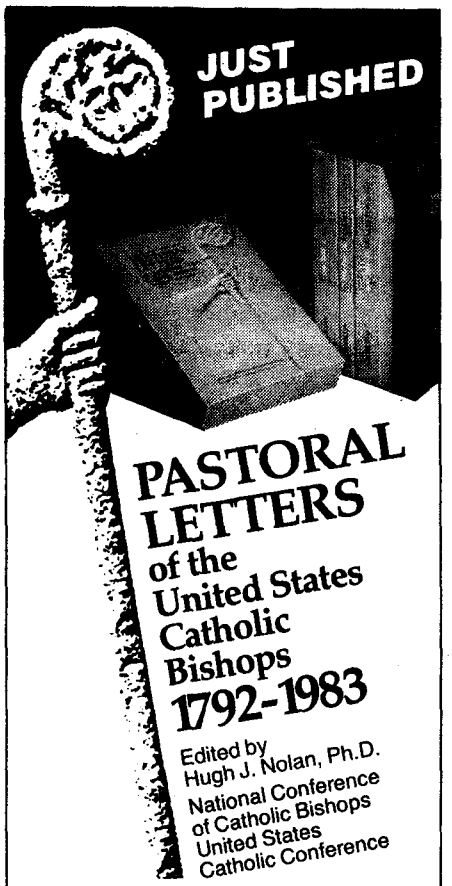
**THEOLOGY IN AFRICA**
by KWESI A. DICKSON
"An understanding of his contribution to African theology is indispensable for all those who wish to be a part of the international theological discourse."
—JAMES H. CONE, Union Theological Seminary, New York
240 pp. $9.95 pbk

**A GANDHIAN THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION**
by IGNATIUS JESUDASAN, S.J.
An Indian theologian offers a very readable theological reflection on how Gandhi, a Hindu, drew inspiration from the life of Christ in his search for a mode of political and spiritual liberation.
"Clarifies the linkage of religion and social transformation."—DANIEL C. MAGUIRE
192 pp. $10.95 pbk

Write for catalog.
**ORBIS BOOKS**
**Maryknoll, NY 10545**




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED




***Anyone, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, who is interested in what makes the Catholic community of this country do the things it does, and take the stands it takes, owes it to him or herself to have—and use —these volumes.***

Dr. Eugene J. Fisher, Executive Secretary
Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

- Four volume boxed set
- Over 215 statements
- Documents 200 years of American church history
- Each volume extensively indexed with a Foreword by a member of the American hierarchy

**The Only Complete Resource of Its Kind in Print!**

Invaluable for libraries, seminaries of all faiths, colleges and university departments of church history, religion, comparative religion, theology, political science, philosophy

**$78 Complete Boxed Set**
*includes postage and handling*

Publishing and Promotion Services
United States Catholic Conference
1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-4105

*Write Marketing Coordinator for discount schedule available to wholesalers, bookstores and libraries.*

vise the missionaries more closely! What one sees here, in any case, is that the severe discipline of the Counter Reformation was more flexible in practice than we might otherwise have expected.

The Jesuit vow of poverty did not preclude for the missionaries the giving of expensive gifts, of which the harpsichord is but one example. They began running errands for the Chinese in order to provide them with European goods, and Ricci himself made a long trip to Macao to buy several bolts of European scarlet woolen cloth for some Chinese officials. The Chinese were intrigued by fancy feathers and plumes, and one of Ricci's associates wrote to the general of the Jesuits in Rome suggesting that "a living ostrich would be a wonderful present for the King of China." The gift never materialized, probably as much for logistical reasons as any other.

This is the stuff the book is made of. In my opinion, it would have been helped by more careful editing, and I noted a few factual errors. But these are quite minor blemishes in a work of such ambitious scope. Spence provides us with a focused description of two matured and elegant cultures — China and Renaissance Italy. He also presents for our reflection and edification — for our awe — the towering figure of Matteo Ricci, just as impressive in reality as he is in legend.

# Dialectics of ecumenism

**GROWTH IN AGREEMENT**
REPORTS AND AGREED STATEMENTS ON ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS ON A WORLD LEVEL

**Edited by Harding Meyer and Lukas Vischer**

**Paulist, $14.95, 514 pp.**

**Michael A. Fahey**

SINCE the founding of the World Council of Churches (1948) and the completion of Vatican II (1965) much of the best collaborative theology has been worked out at international and national bilateral consultations. In the search for full communion, members of sister churches have published a number of convergence statements, documents notoriously difficult to locate, scattered in specialized journals, some in foreign languages. This volume, part of a projected series entitled *Ecumenical Documents*, whose first volume, *Doing the Truth in Charity* (ed. T. Stransky and J. B. Sheerin), appeared in 1982, aims to gather up the fragments. Here the focus is on international consultations, but a later volume will record the national dialogue such as the U.S. Lutheran/Roman Catholic or French Reformed/Roman Catholic conversations.

Composed by experts appointed by their own church leaders, the texts are not esoteric and avoid the jargon and antique terminology one finds even in documents of Vatican II. But then collaborating with twenty ecumenical theologians is a simpler task than achieving consensus among 2000 bishops. The topics are the historically disputed questions relating to the Holy Spirit, baptism, eucharist, ministry, and authority. Of the twelve groups included here, seven have Roman Catholics as partners. Unfortunately omitted is the important text of the international Orthodox/Roman Catholic consultation on "The Mystery of the Church and of the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity," the so-called Munich text of 1982, the first "official" agreement between these churches since the Council of Florence in 1439.

To most readers the best known of the dialogues is the Anglican/Roman Catholic one which in 1981 concluded a comprehensive *Final Report* shortly before the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury prayed together in Canterbury Cathedral. Many readers may be familiar with the so-called Lima text of the Faith and Order Commission on "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry" which is also included here even though it is not a bilateral text as such. To the relief of ecumenists, the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, rather than the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has the responsibility to encourage



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

national episcopal conferences to elicit local and regional reactions to the Lima text. The purpose is to see if the Lima profession corresponds to the faith of the ancient church. The United States Catholic Conference has encouraged each diocese to set up study groups to assist in the work of "reception."

Two distinguished European ecumenists have edited this volume which should be in the reference collections of university, seminary, and parish libraries. Whoever supplies the pamphlet racks in church vestibules would be well-advised to stock up on this volume for the enlightenment of preachers and others. A good starting point for the uninitiated reader would be the Reformed/Roman Catholic text on "The Presence of Christ in Church and World" or the tripartite (Roman Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran) text on "Marriage and the Problem of Mixed Marriages." Also fascinating are the texts prepared by Methodists and Catholics on discerning the Spirit, on prayer, and on reform movements. All the texts, most of which date from the seventies or early eighties, are sensitive to the Christian "hierarchy of truths," that order of importance attached to creeds and doctrines. The writers are alert to the signs of the times. When overlapping and repetition occur, the effect is not one of boredom but excitement before an emerging consensus.

The introduction succinctly states the overall features and goals of the conversations. A list of suggested readings would have been helpful as well as a brief introduction to each text. The thankless task of preparing a comprehensive index of the texts fell to Stephen Cranford of Louisville. The system used is rather idiosyncratic and regrettably, in the haste to print an already long-overdue volume, certain paragraph numbers crucial for the index are missing from the Disciples/Roman Catholic and the 1981 Old Catholic/Orthodox texts.

Some unsettling questions need to be raised about the process of preparing consensus statements. The churches, especially the Roman Catholic church, are at a loss to know what to do with the

## REVIEWERS

FATHER WILLIAM H. SHANNON, *professor emeritus at Nazareth College, is the author of* Thomas Merton's Dark Path.

BRADD SHORE, *an associate professor of anthropology at Emory University, has done extensive fieldwork in Western Samoa.*

JOEL WELLS *is the editor of the Thomas More Press.*

FATHER ROBERT IMBELLI, *who teaches theology at the Maryknoll School of Theology in New York, is spending his sabbatical year as a visiting fellow of Princeton Theological Seminary.*

RONALD CHRIST, *managing editor of* Sites, *has recently translated Manuel Puig's* Under a Mantle of Stars.

ROBERT PHILLIPS *is a poet, fiction writer, and critic. His edition of* Letters of Delmore Schwartz *will be published this fall.*

FATHER JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J. *is professor of history at Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

FATHER MICHAEL A. FAHEY, S.J., *who has just completed his term as president of the Catholic Theology Society of America, is professor of ecclesiology at Concordia University in Montreal.*


# Politics and Religion???

Long before the current debate on religion and politics, **Communio: International Catholic Review** addressed this critical issue of our time. The Winter 1982 journal reflected on such themes as

- A Catholic perspective on democracy and moral-religious neutrality
- Christianity and a pluralistic society
- The Moral Majority and Christian politics
- Murray and Maritain on religion and politics

Receive a **free copy** of this special **Religion and Politics** issue (bound copy while supplies last, photocopy after that) when you order your subscription to **Communio**.

**Communio** seeks **renewal rooted in tradition**, sharing and fostering unity in the Church. It offers theological and cultural reflection from a Catholic perspective by noted theologians, philosophers, historians and social scientists. Authors include Avery Dulles, Glenn W. Olsen, Walter Kasper, Bishop Karl Lehmann, and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

See for yourself what makes **Communio: International Catholic Review** an award-winning, first-rate quarterly journal, reflecting on critical issues of our time.

## ORDER CARD

Please enter my subscription to **Communio** and send me the **Religion and Politics** issue.

☐ 1 year { U.S. — $14.00 / Outside U.S. — $17.00 ☐ 2 years { U.S. — $26.00 / Outside U.S. — $31.00

☐ Payment enclosed (in U.S. currency, please) ☐ Bill me

NAME (please print)_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____ ZIP_____

(COUNTRY)_____

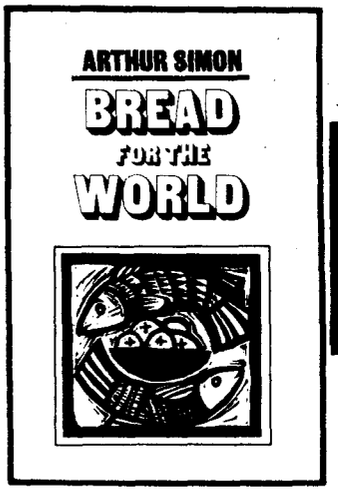
Make check payable to:
**COMMUNIO**, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258 USA




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

**"BREAD FOR THE WORLD is a very human and moving analysis...an eloquent plea which simply cannot be ignored, for citizen action."**

***—James P. Grant, Director, UNICEF***



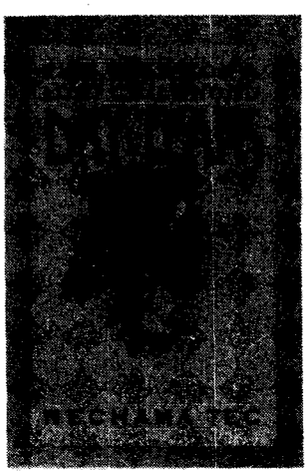

**NOW REVISED AND UPDATED FOR THE 1980s.**

This award-winning introduction to world hunger has been acclaimed by economists and novices alike. It has initiated thousands of ordinary readers into the hunger movement and has also served as a text at colleges and universities across the country. Using simple, clear language the book describes hunger and links it to social and economic causes. It features the crucial role that U.S. policies play. The author writes: "One stroke of the President's pen or one vote by Congress can have a positive or negative impact on hungry people that dwarfs private efforts on their behalf." He provides evidence that citizen action can bring about important policy changes. **BREAD FOR THE WORLD** is a call for action!

Paper $4.95

**Paulist Press, 545 Island Rd., Ramsey, N.J. 07446 (201) 825-7300**

Not since *The Diary of Anne Frank* has there been an account of the war years that has touched such a wide range of readers.



This is the true story of an 11-year-old girl whose family found refuge with Polish Christians and survived. *Dry Tears* tells of a child who learned to "pass" in the forbidding Christian world...a quietly moving coming-of-age story...an a unique celebration of the best human qualities that surface under the worst conditions.

"By concentrating on the relationships to the Poles around her, [Tec] sheds considerable light on an inadequately treated aspect of...the Holocaust."—*Judaica Book News*

"Renders with such honest yet compassionate detail the struggle of Jews to 'pass' as Christians among...people who sheltered them, loved them, lived off them, and finally...were ashamed rather than proud of having taken them in."—Geoffrey Hartman, Yale University

$6.95 paper

*At better bookstore or order directly from:*

**Oxford Paperbacks**

Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016

finished products. Like orbiting capsules trapped in outer space, they circle endlessly in search of a landing dock. At the recent eighty-eighth *Katholikentag* in Munich, July 1984, one speaker speculated that on the final judgment day another study commission will be constituted to assess these issues further. The texts must lead to conversion and adaptation else they remain hollow. Liturgical and structural adjustments must follow from accepting the documents. Yet the texts are still having little impact on preaching and catechesis, just at a time when neo-conservative groups such as Catholics United for the Faith are urging Vatican offices to state "official Catholic doctrine" and to subtract or add imprimaturs. Committed ecumenical theologians may well lose heart unless those who bear special responsibility for the churches soon take some concrete actions.

## In Brief

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND, *by Asa Briggs. Viking, $25, 320 pp.*

"Social history," says Asa Briggs, "is the history of society. It is concerned with structures and processes of change. Nothing is irrelevant to it." Which means that a one-volume social history of England, from Stonehenge to Rolling Stones, encompassing diet and demography as well as royalty and revolution, is almost a contradiction in terms. Well, centuries do fly by as though from the window of a speeding train — helped, of course, by almost two-hundred-and-fifty carefully selected illustrations, and helped most of all by Briggs's remarkable weaving of different topics and various schools of historical interpretation into a single, lively narravitve. P.S.

## Correspondence

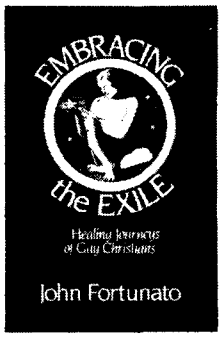
*(Continued from page 548)*

the right, there is more of what has been called paleomorphism in theology and in cult. Unlike the Jews, we have not sorted out our temples or our publications. Hence the turmoil. Hasidic Catholicism does indeed believe in a single church view on abortion. *The Wanderer* and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WINSTON • SEABURY

## Pastoral, spiritual, theology New for Fall '84.




### Embracing the Exile
*by John E. Fortunato*
Describes a journey of spiritual and psychological deepening for people who are both gay and Christian. "Timely, honest, constructive . . . " —*Spirituality Today.* (156 pp.)
0-8164-2637-6, PB #6338, $7.95

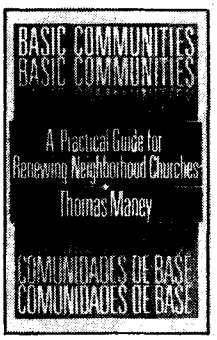
### Toward a Christian Economic Ethic *by Daniel Rush Finn and Prentiss L. Pemberton*
A timely application of a Christian ethic to the welfare system, energy crisis, and other contemporary problems. (240 pp.)
0-86683-876-7, PB #7919, $10.95

### Images of Christ
*by Glenn F. Chesnut*
An introduction to Christology for undergraduate and seminary students. Explores the key images of Christ in a comprehensive historical/theological context. (176 pp.)
0-86683-875-9, PB #7918, $8.95

### Jung and the Christian Way
*by Christopher Bryant*
Shows that Jung's mysterious "individuation" is fully compatible with traditional Christian practices of self-examination, prayer/worship, meditation/contemplation. (144 pp.)
0-86683-872-4, PB #7917, $7.95

### Prayers of St. Augustine
*by Barry Ulanov*
A contemporary anthology of Augustine's works gently refined into modern language. (144 pp.)
0-86683-881-3, PB #7460, $7.95

### Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels *by Herman Hendrickx*
Explores how these gospel texts emerged in the early Church, and what they mean for us today. From Geoffrey Chapman, London.
**The Infancy Narratives** (144 pp.)
0-225-66398-8, PB #8523, $9.95
**The Passion Narratives** (210 pp.)
0-225-66400-3, PB #8524, $9.95
**The Resurrection Narratives** (168 pp.)
0-225-66401-1, PB #8525, $9.95
**The Sermon on the Mount** (228 pp.)
0-225-66399-6, PB #8526, $9.95



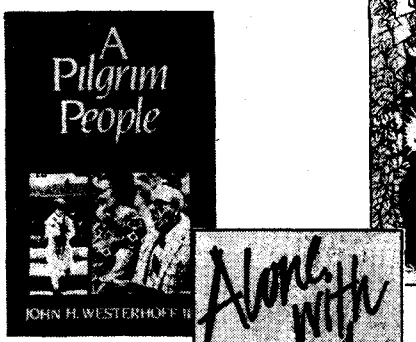

### Basic Communities
*by Thomas Maney*
A guide for renewing neighborhood churches, adapted from the Latin American *comunidades de base* by Maney and his colleagues to form 300 "basic communities" in the United States. (96 pp.)
0-86683-857-0, PB #8411, $5.95

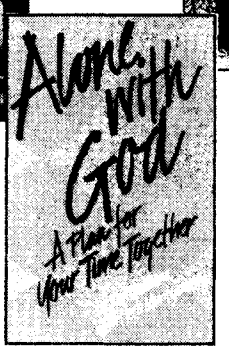
### Introducing the Lessons of the Church Year
*by Frederick Houk Borsch*
A guide for lay readers and congregations including lesson introductions for the 3-year cycle, a text variation guide, and ideas for public reading. (240 pp.)
0-8164-2496-9, PB #6102, $8.95

### Premarital Counseling
*by John L. C. Mitman*
A manual for clergy and counselors to guide them through a most crucial pastoral responsibility. Four personalized sessions. Concise, effective, ecumenical. (128 pp.)
0-86683-879-1, PB #7874, $6.95

### RCIA: The Rites Revisited
*by Sandra DeGidio, OSM*
Helps parish leaders make the rites of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) human and meaningful for catechumens and for the entire parish community. (144 pp.)
0-86683-837-6, PB #8436, $7.95

### A Pilgrim People
*by John H. Westerhoff III*
Learn through the Church year. Relates the Church year to Christian living and explains how significant gospel texts found in the lectionary speak to the lives of ordinary Christians. (128 pp.)
0-86683-884-8, PB #7462, $7.95



### Alone with God
*by Ron DelBene with Herb Montgomery*
A retreat in a book! DelBene, an Episcopal priest and retreat director, outlines a step-by-step plan for being alone with God for an hour, a day, or a weekend. (120 pp.)
0-86683-856-2, PB #8434, $4.95

### The House of the Soul and Concerning the Inner Life
*by Evelyn Underhill*
Reflections on prayer and the inner life by a renowned spiritual director. These two Underhill classics—long out of print—are now available in one volume. (150 pp.)
0-86683-882-1, PB #7459, $6.95

### Julian *by J. Janda*
A one-actor chancel play based on the life of Julian of Norwich, a mystic, recluse and spiritual guide who lived at the time of Chaucer. Full of poetic, life-celebrating imagery. (112 pp.)
0-8164-2632-5, PB #6464, $6.95

*Write for a complete book catalog.*

WINSTON • SEABURY 430 Oak Grove Minneapolis, MN 55403 Call toll free: 1-800-328-5125.
In AK, HI, MN: 612-871-7000.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*Commonweal*'s editorial are at one on this. And that hurts the friends of *Commonweal*.

Theologians and the liberal Catholic press have buckled on the abortion issue, and have let the Catholic hasidim set the terms of the debate — something that would not be tolerated on any other issue. This leaves our politicians out on a limb, with little or no help forthcoming from the magisterium of the teaching chair of theologians. (St. Thomas Aquinas spoke of the magisterium of the pastoral chair of bishops.) And then *Commonweal* editorially attacks the social-justice-minded politicians without citing the right-wing politicians for using their new-found love of embryos as a shield for their mean-spirited social agenda. (Reagan signed the California abortion bill, and the Reverend Falwell admits he is a Jerry-come-lately on this issue).

Why, your editorial asks, do the politicians say: "I'm personally opposed, but . . . "? Answer: because *Commonweal et al* have not dissipated the right-wing lie that "the church's view" is a negative absolute on all abortions, and that any other view is tantamount to apostasy. Public apostasy is bad politics.

Cuomo and Ferraro are victims of a Catholic intellectual default on abortion. To her credit, Ferraro has said more than "I'm personally opposed." She cited cases such as rape where she would want women to have a choice. There, it seems, she is not personally opposed.

Where is the supportive voice of intellectual Catholicism that would show why a Catholic politician could say: "In the best of all possible worlds, where women are not victimized, where poverty is banished, and where contraception is sanctioned and effective, there would be no need for abortions; short of that Utopia, not all abortions can be called objectively wrong, and I will not seek to impose Prohibition II on our polity and end legitimate debate"? Our Catholic tradition of respect for reason and honest pluralism admits of such good sense and such good political ethics.

*Commonweal* is tilted to the right on the abortion issue. It's an honest tilt, and that is fine. But don't tell us Democrats who see the matter as more complex that we react "almost entirely in response to the pressure of pro-choice women's groups." New Adams seduced by New Eves! Don't suggest that only absolute anti-abortionists are the ones "with at least some moral qualms about abortion." And don't assume that there is only one form of anti-abortionism. We *Commonweal* Catholics deserve better of you. So, too, do Geraldine Ferraro and Mario Cuomo. DANIEL C. MAGUIRE

**CORRECTION:** The comments by Sebastian Moore for the September 21 symposium on "The End of Catholicism?" ["The Heart of the Disciple," p. 494], originally contained the following sentence: "It is a commonplace where wisdom is taught and learned, that the teacher opens the heart of the disciple to the reality of spirit, to a sense of people and their life that differs, as chalk from cheese, from commonsense knowing, 'knowing according to the flesh' as Paul calls it." In dividing this sentence into two shorter ones, the editors inadvertently made it read as though Paul's phrase about "knowing according to the flesh" referred to the disciple's new-found openness to "the reality of spirit" and "a sense of people and their life" when, obviously, Paul's phrase is meant to refer to "commonsense knowing." Father Moore has justly protested this confusion, insisting "I really do not want to appear even more ignorant of Paul than I am." Our apologies to both Sebastian Moore and St. Paul.

## Amazed

Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

*To the Editors:* "The church's apparent refusal to acknowledge 'legitimate' differences on abortion . . ." [*Commonweal*, August 10].

This mentality never ceases to amaze me! The "CHURCH'S"! Who or what is the "church"? One would think that Our Holy Father, the Magisterium, and the "church" run around making their own morality and that all of us should be free to do the same. Has no one heard of the Ten Commandments? Has no one heard of the natural law? Has no one felt in his/her own conscience remorse over thought and/or actions, no matter what modern "enlightenment" might teach? Very, very strange. As a friend of mine always says, "You can't fool Mother Nature." Why do we keep trying?

SISTER JEANNE TIERNEY

# Classified


RATES: 70¢ a word, one time; 66¢, three times; 63¢, six times; Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., NYC 10016.

**Religious Community**

Considering Religious Life? Founded to ransom slaves, our small community of men have grounded our lives and our work of liberation in fraternity, prayer, and the Bible for over 800 years. Write Fr. Bill Axe, The Trinitarian Friars, P.O. Box 5719, Baltimore, MD 21208; or call collect (301) 484-2250.

**Priesthood**

Desire Priesthood? Over 30? Completed B.A.? 1-800-633-2252, Father Nigro, Gonzaga University, Spokane Wa. 99258.

**Kirkridge Gathering**

The Company at Kirkridge, a supportive network for contemporary Christians will meet October 26, 27, 28, 1984 at Kirkridge, Bangor, PA. Petru Dumitriu, lay theologian and author of *Incognito* and *To the Unknown God* will speak on themes from those books. For more information contact Anthony Ciccariello, 520 W. Gray St., Elmira, NY 14905.

**Books**

Still looking for a book? Free Search service. Write: Books, Dept. CW, Box 1766, Madison Sq. Sta., N.Y. 10159.

**Conference**

Conference on Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day, "Struggles in Fidelity" with Marc H. Ellis, November 9-11 at Powell House in Old Chatham, N.Y. Call (518) 794-8811.




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The **National Catholic Reporter** invites you to...

# COME TO THE SOURCE

Look at the day's headlines — then look behind them: *Religion* is the driving force behind many of the most pressing issues.

Whether it's abortion or nuclear weapons, Central America or the U.S. economy, equal rights or capital punishment, millions of people are taking their stand on the issues because of *religious* convictions.

Many news sources completely overlook the significance of religion in their coverage. And a concerned believer like you can't wait for the mass media to catch up to the important religious stories — and perhaps never catch *on* to their deeper implications . . . but what other source do you have?

The *National Catholic Reporter* gives you something nobody else does — not only is it a highly respected source for complete religious news coverage, but *more importantly* it helps you understand the *implications* of the religious news — for you and your family, and for the future of church, nation and world. And NCR has been doing this for a generation.

ON THE OCCASION OF NCR'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY, WE INVITE YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR *ANNIVERSARY INTRODUCTORY SUBSCRIPTION.*

You can try NCR in your home or office at *substantial* savings — with a complete guarantee of satisfaction or your money back! You can receive the next 23 weekly issues of NCR (one-half year's worth) for only $9.50. That's a mere 41¢ an issue, nearly *60%* off NCR's cover price!

### WHY THIS SPECIAL OFFER?

Because people who share your religious concerns, and are dissatisfied with superficial religious news coverage, have made NCR *their* source — and we'd like you to test the difference NCR can make as *your* source for religious news and perspective.

Our 20th anniversary offers you a special chance to discover NCR for only 41¢ a week. *That's less than the price of a cup of coffee in many restaurants!* You'll receive exceptional coverage of religious news, insightful analysis, and host of other unique benefits:

**NCR IS YOUR SOURCE FOR *PRAYING* — our popular magazine supplement helps people like you integrate activity and reflection. *Praying* is down-to-earth spirituality that enriches your inner life and helps you make explicit the connections between your faith in God and the world around you (connections you'll find implicit on every page of NCR). You receive each attractive issue of *Praying* free with your subscription.

**NCR IS YOUR SOURCE FOR SPECIAL ISSUES — These full-length, award-winning treatments cover vital subjects ranging from a 20-year retrospective on the Second Vatican Council to a recent issue on "Women Doing Theology." Our special issues offer you in-depth understanding without wasted time, because our staff does the formidable research for each presentation.

**NCR IS ALSO YOUR SOURCE FOR — *"Ad Random,"* our popular and practical classified ads; Summer, Fall, and Winter *"Listings,"* complete directories of educational opportunities, retreats, conferences, workshops, . . . everything you need to make better choices for personal or career development; *"Credence Cassettes,"* the largest, most highly respected selection of audio cassettes on prayer, scripture, spirituality, personal growth and religious education. You receive Credence's extensive catalogs free with your newspaper.

**ABOVE ALL, NCR IS YOUR SOURCE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF TODAY'S NEWS — Our columnists are second to none, and you'll find a wide spectrum of opinion expressed in our pages, because NCR is committed to presenting *all* viewpoints on the controversial issues.

NCR has worked hard for 20 years to earn the respect it enjoys today. And you couldn't pick a better time to put NCR to the test as your source — you'll reap the harvest of those 20 years now, during our anniversary, and you can do so at great savings and absolutely no risk!

In addition, we'll send you a *free and timely gift* as a special bonus for joining us during our anniversary. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin recently created headlines with his call for consistency across the spectrum of "life issues" — abortion, nuclear weapons, poverty and unemployment, capital punishment, and euthanasia, among others.

We've collected his groundbreaking "Seamless Garment" speeches and will send you a copy of this 24-page document, complete with reflection questions, as a gift to you for joining us during our anniversary!

SO . . .

**COME TO THE SOURCE**
**MAKE NCR *YOUR* SOURCE FOR RELIGIOUS NEWS AND PERSPECTIVE**

**You can begin your introductory subscription with a FREE PHONE CALL:**

## 1-800-821-7926

(Call Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Central Time. Missouri residents call collect, 1-816-531-0538.)

If you prefer, clip and mail this coupon to:

***ANNIVERSARY SUBSCRIPTION***
***National Catholic Reporter***
*P.O. Box 281*
*Kansas City, MO 64141*

YES, I accept your invitation to test NCR as a source of religious news and perspective! Send me the next 23 issues (one-half year) for only $9.50. Also send "The Seamless Garment" by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin as my gift.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____

STATE_____ ZIP_____

YOUR GUARANTEE
If at any time, for any reason, you wish to discontinue your subscription, simply notify us and we will promptly refund your money for all undelivered issues.

☐ Payment enclosed
Charge My: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa
Card No:

Expire Date:_____/_____
Signature:_____

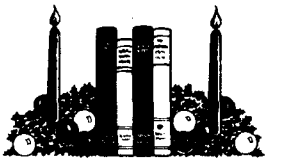
☐ Please bill me

(Outside of U.S.A.: Add $3.50 additional postage. All prices, U.S. currency or equivalent.)

0502

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# New Titles and Old Favorites
# Christian Classics...Christmas 1984



## MY FATHER'S BUSINESS
**Creating a New Future For the People of God**
***by Louis De Thomasis, F.S.C.***
A practical formula for effective church management. The author demonstrates forcefully how the Vatican II principle of collegiality should be applied throughout the church.
**120 pages—paperback—$6.95**

## GOD AND MAN IN MODERN SPIRITUALITY
***by Finbarr Connolly, C.S.S.R.***
A compact presentation of modern Christian spirituality (as opposed to traditional spirituality).
**270 pages—paperback—$9.95**

## IS IRISH CATHOLICISM DYING?
***by Peadar Kirby***
A very timely and provocative work on subject of great interest to those who relish the pursuit of church developments. The author asks some very pointed questions.
**96 pages—paperback—$5.95**

## BIOETHICS AND BELIEF
***by John Mahoney, S.J.***
An up-to-the-minute presentation of the main issues of Bioethics: on fertility control, on death and dying, on the beginning of life, and on medical research and experimentation.
**160 pages—paperback—$8.95**

## MY ANGEL WILL GO BEFORE YOU
***by Georges Huber—translated from the French.***
**134 pages—paperback—$7.95**
**cloth—$12.95**

## LANGUAGE OF THE RITE
***by Roger Grainger***
**192 pages—paperback—$8.95**

## DOGMA
***by Michael Schmaus-translated from the German.***
**The set of six volumes—paperback—$60.00**

## MISSION TO THE POOREST,
**Prayer and Practice**
***by M. R. Loew***
**184 pages—paperback—$7.95**

## DIFFICULTIES IN MENTAL PRAYER
***by Dom Eugene Boylan***
**128 pages—paperback—$4.95**

## ENCOUNTERS WITH SILENCE
***by Karl Rahner—translated by James A. Demske.***
**98 pages—paperback—$4.95**

## PATROLOGY
***by Johannes Quasten***
**3 volume set—$50.00**

## GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN LIVING
**A New Compendium of Moral Theology**
***by George V. Lobo, S.J.***
**420 pages—paperback—$16.95**

## HISTORY OF DOGMAS
***by J. Tixeront—translated from the French by H.L.B.***
**3 volumes—paperback—$50.00**

## ENTHUSIASM
***by Ronald A. Knox***
**630 pages—paperback—$14.95**

## THE THEOLOGY OF VATICAN II
***by Christopher Butler***
**240 pages—paperback—$17.50**

## CATECHISM FOR CATHOLICS—
**A Summary of Christian Doctrine for Adults**
***by Msg. Michael Tynan***
**120 pages—paperback—$5.95**

## SPIRITUAL ESPOUSALS
***by Jan Van Ruysbroek—Translated by E. Colledge.***
**200 pages—paperback—$8.95**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER
***by St. Cyprian—translated for Meditation by Edmond Bonin***
**128 pages—paperback—$6.95**

**SEND FOR COMPLETE CHRISTMAS LIST**

*At your religious bookstore or from...*

# CHRISTIAN CLASSICS, INC.

P.O. Box 30 * 73 W. Main St. Westminster, MD. 21157



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED